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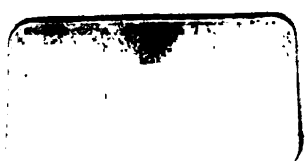

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OF

BRITISH ESSAYISTS

INCLUDING BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL SKETCHES

WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY

CHAUNCEY C. STARKWEATHER, A.B., LL.B.

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IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES

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—

THE CONVALESCENT

—

DETACHED THOUGHTS ON BOOKS AND READING

—

REJOICINGS UPON THE NEW YEAR'S COMING OF AGE

—

BY

CHARLES LAMB

CHARLES LAMB

1775—1834

Charles Lamb was born February 18, 1775, in the Temple, where his father was clerk to one of the Benchers, and was educated at Christ's Hospital. During the early and greater part of his life, Lamb, poor and unfriended, was drudging as a clerk in the India House; and it was not till late in life that he was unchained from the desk. Yet in this, the most monotonous and unideal of all employments, he found means to fill his mind with the finest aroma of old English authors; particularly of the prose writers and dramatists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: and in his earliest compositions, such as the drama of "John Woodvil," and subsequently in the "Essays of Elia," although the world at first perceived a mere imitation of their quaintness of expression, there was, in reality, a revival of their very spirit.

The "Essays of Elia," contributed by Lamb at different times to the "London Magazine," are the finest things, for humor, taste, penetration, and vivacity, which have appeared since the days of Montaigne. Where shall we find such intense delicacy of feeling, such singular happiness of expression, such a searching into the very body of truth, as in these unpretending essays? A chance word, dropped half by accident, a parenthesis, an exclamation, often let us into the very mechanism of the sentiment—admit us, as it were, behind the scenes. The style has a peculiar and most subtle charm; not the result of labor, for it is found in as great perfection in his familiar letters—a certain quaintness and antiquity, not affected in Lamb, but the natural garb of his thoughts. As in all true humorists, his pleasantry was inseparably allied with the finest pathos: the merry quip on the tongue was but the commentary on the tear which trembled in the eye. He possessed the power, which is seen in Shakespeare's fools, of conveying a deep philosophical verity in a jest—of uniting the wildest merriment with the truest pathos and the deepest wisdom. It is not only the easy laugh of Touchstone in the forest of Arden, but the heart-rending pleasantry of Lear's fool in the storm.

Lamb was the schoolfellow, the devoted admirer and friend, of Coleridge; and perhaps there never was an individual so loved by all his contemporaries, by men of every opinion, of every shade of literary, political, and religious sentiment, as this great wit and amiable man. The passionate enemy of everything like cant, commonplace, or conventionality, his writings derive a singular charm, a kind of fresh and wild flavor, from his delight in paradox.

In his drama of "John Woodvil" he endeavored to revive the forms of the Elizabethan drama; and the work might be mistaken for some woodland play of Heywood or Shirley. But it was his "Specimens of the Old English Dramatists" which showed what treasures of the richest poetry lay concealed in the unpublished, and in modern times unknown, writers of that wonderful age, whose fame had been eclipsed by the glory of some two or three names of the same period. All the essays given here are from the "Essays of Elia." Several of them are little narratives, generally visions and parables, inexpressibly simple and beautiful. "Dream-Children," an essay of that order, is worthy of Jean Paul himself.

IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES

"I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy in anything. Those natural repugnancies do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch."—"*Religio Medici.*"

THAT the author of the "Religio Medici," mounted upon the airy stilts of abstraction, conversant about notional and conjectural essences—in whose categories of being the possible took the upper hand of the actual—should have overlooked the impertinent individualities of such poor concretions as mankind, is not much to be admired. It is rather to be wondered at, that in the genus of animals he should have condescended to distinguish that species at all. For myself—earthbound and fettered to the scene of my activities—

Standing on earth, nor rapt above the sky,

I confess that I do feel the differences of mankind, national or individual, to an unhealthy excess. I can look with no indifferent eye upon things or persons. Whatever is, is to me a matter of taste or distaste; or when once it becomes indifferent, it begins to be disrelishing. I am, in plainer words, a bundle of prejudices—made up of likings and dislikings—the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies. In a certain sense, I hope it may be said of me that I am a lover of my species. I can feel for all indifferently, but I cannot feel toward all equally. The more purely-English word that expresses sympathy, will better explain my meaning. I can be a friend to a worthy man, who upon another account cannot be my mate or fellow. I cannot like all people alike.[1]

[1] I would be understood as confining myself to the subject of imperfect sympathies. To nations or classes of men there can be no direct antipathy. There may be individuals born and constellated so opposite to another individual nature, that the same sphere cannot hold them. I have met with my moral antipodes, and can believe the story of two persons meeting (who never saw one another before in their lives) and instantly fighting.

"We by proof find there should be
'Twixt man and man such an antipathy,

I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. They cannot like me—and, in truth, I never knew one of that nation who attempted to do it. There is something more plain and ingenuous in their mode of proceeding. We know one another at first sight. There is an order of imperfect intellects (under which mine must be content to rank) which in its constitution is essentially anti-Caledonian. The owners of the sort of faculties I allude to, have minds rather suggestive than comprehensive. They have no pretences to much clearness or precision in their ideas, or in their manner of expressing them. Their intellectual wardrobe (to confess fairly) has few whole pieces in it. They are content with fragments and scattered pieces of Truth. She presents no full front to them—a feature or side-face at the most. Hints and glimpses, germs and crude essays at a system, is the utmost they pretend to. They beat up a little game peradventure—and leave it to knottier heads, more robust constitutions, to run it down. The light that lights them is not steady and polar, but mutable and shifting: waxing, and again waning. Their conversation is accordingly. They will throw out a random word in or out of season, and be content to let it pass for what it is worth. They cannot speak always as if they were upon their oath—but must be understood, speaking or writing, with some abatement. They seldom wait to mature a proposition, but e'en bring it to market in the green ear. They delight to impart their defective discoveries as they arise, without waiting for their full development. They are no systematizers, and would but err more by attempting it. Their minds, as I said before, are suggestive merely. The brain of a true Caledonian (if I am not mistaken) is constituted upon quite a different plan. His Minerva is born in panoply. You are never admitted to see his ideas in their growth—if, indeed, they do grow, and are not rather put together upon principles of

That though he can show no just reason why
For any former wrong or injury,
Can neither find a blemish in his fame,
Nor aught in face or feature justly blame,
Can challenge or accuse him of no evil,
Yet, notwithstanding, hates him as a devil."

The lines are from old Heywood's "Hierarchie of Angels," and he subjoins a curious story in confirmation, of a Spaniard who attempted to assassinate a King Ferdinand of Spain, and being put to the rack could give no other reason for the deed but an inveterate antipathy which he had taken to the first sight of the king—

"The cause which to that act compell'd him
Was, he ne'er loved him since he first beheld him."

clockwork. You never catch his mind in an undress. He never hints or suggests anything, but unlades his stock of ideas in perfect order and completeness. He brings his total wealth into company, and gravely unpacks it. His riches are always about him. He never stoops to catch a glittering something in your presence to share it with you, before he quite knows whether it be true touch or not. You cannot cry halves to anything that he finds. He does not find, but bring. You never witness his first apprehension of a thing. His understanding is always at its meridian—you never see the first dawn, the early streaks. He has no falterings of self-suspicion. Surmises, guesses, misgivings, half-intuitions, semi-consciousnesses, partial illuminations, dim instincts, embryo conceptions, have no place in his brain or vocabulary. The twilight of dubiety never falls upon him. Is he orthodox—he has no doubts. Is he an infidel—he has none either. Between the affirmative and the negative there is no borderland with him. You cannot hover with him upon the confines of truth, or wander in the maze of a probable argument. He always keeps the path. You cannot make excursions with him—for he sets you right. His taste never fluctuates. His morality never abates. He cannot compromise, or understand middle actions. There can be but a right and a wrong. His conversation is as a book. His affirmations have the sanctity of an oath. You must speak upon the square with him. He stops a metaphor like a suspected person in an enemy's country. "A healthy book?" said one of his countrymen to me, who had ventured to give that appellation to "John Buncle"—"did I catch rightly what you said? I have heard of a man in health, and of a healthy state of body, but I do not see how that epithet can be properly applied to a book." Above all, you must beware of indirect expressions before a Caledonian. Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, if you are unhappily blessed with a vein of it. Remember you are upon your oath. I have a print of a graceful female after Leonardo da Vinci, which I was showing off to Mr. —. After he had examined it minutely, I ventured to ask him how he liked "My Beauty" (a foolish name it goes by among my friends)—when he very gravely assured me, that "he had considerable respect for my character and talents" (so he was pleased to say), "but had not given himself much thought about

the degree of my personal pretensions." The misconception staggered me, but did not seem much to disconcert him. Persons of this nation are particularly fond of affirming a truth—which nobody doubts. They do not so properly affirm, as annunciate it. They do indeed appear to have such a love for truth (as if, like virtue, it were valuable for itself) that all truth becomes equally valuable, whether the proposition that contains it be new or old, disputed, or such as is impossible to become a subject of disputation. I was present not long since at a party of North Britons, where a son of Burns was expected; and happened to drop a silly expression (in my South British way), that I wished it were the father instead of the son—when four of them started up at once to inform me, that "that was impossible, because he was dead." An impracticable wish, it seems, was more than they could conceive. Swift has hit off this part of their character, namely, their love of truth, in his biting way, but with an illiberality that necessarily confines the passage to the margin.[2] The tediousness of these people is certainly provoking. I wonder if they ever tire one another? In my early life I had a passionate fondness for the poetry of Burns. I have sometimes foolishly hoped to ingratiate myself with his countrymen by expressing it. But I have always found that a true Scot resents your admiration of his compatriot, even more than he would your contempt of him. The latter he imputes to your "imperfect acquaintance with many of the words which he uses"; and the same objection makes it a presumption in you to suppose that you can admire him. Thomson they seem to have forgotten. Smollett they have neither forgotten nor forgiven, for his delineation of Rory and his companion, upon their first introduction to our metropolis. Speak of Smollett as a great genius, and they will retort upon you Hume's history compared with *his* continuation of it. What if the historian had continued Humphrey Clinker?

I have, in the abstract, no disrespect for Jews. They are a piece of stubborn antiquity, compared with which Stonehenge

[2] There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves, and entertain their company, with relating facts of no consequence, not at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scotch than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gestures peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable.—"Hints Toward an Essay on Conversation."

is in its nonage. They date beyond the pyramids. But I should not care to be in habits of familiar intercourse with any of that nation. I confess that I have not the nerves to enter their synagogues. Old prejudices cling about me. I cannot shake off the story of Hugh of Lincoln. Centuries of injury, contempt, and hate, on the one side—of cloaked revenge, dissimulation, and hate, on the other, between our and their fathers, must and ought to affect the blood of the children. I cannot believe it can run clear and kindly yet; or that a few fine words, such as candor, liberality, the light of the nineteenth century, can close up the breaches of so deadly a disunion. A Hebrew is nowhere congenial to me. He is least distasteful on change—for the mercantile spirit levels all distinctions, as all are beauties in the dark. I boldly confess that I do not relish the approximation of Jew and Christian, which has become so fashionable. The reciprocal endearments have, to me, something hypocritical and unnatural in them. I do not like to see the church and synagogue kissing and congeeing in awkward postures of an affected civility. If *they* are converted, why do they not come over to us altogether? Why keep up a form of separation when the life of it is fled? If they can sit with us at table, why do they kick at our cookery? I do not understand these half-convertites. Jews christianizing—Christians judaizing—puzzle me. I like fish or flesh. A moderate Jew is a more confounding piece of anomaly than a wet Quaker. The spirit of the synagogue is essentially separative. B— would have been more in keeping if he had abided by the faith of his forefathers. There is a fine scorn in his face which nature meant to be of —— Christians. The Hebrew spirit is strong in him, in spite of his proselytism. He cannot conquer the shibboleth. How it breaks out when he sings, "The children of Israel passed through the Red Sea"! The auditors, for the moment, are as Egyptians to him, and he rides over our necks in triumph. There is no mistaking him. B— has a strong expression of sense in his countenance, and it is confirmed by his singing. The foundation of his vocal excellence is sense. He sings with understanding, as Kemble delivered dialogue. He would sing the Commandments, and give an appropriate character to each prohibition. His nation in general have not over-sensible countenances. How should they?—but you seldom see a silly ex-

pression among them. Gain, and the pursuit of gain, sharpen a man's visage. I never heard of an idiot being born among them. Some admire the Jewish female physiognomy. I admire it but with trembling. Jael had those full, dark, inscrutable eyes.

In the negro countenance you will often meet with strong traits of benignity. I have felt yearnings of tenderness toward some of these faces—or rather masks—that have looked out kindly upon one in casual encounters in the streets and highways. I love what Fuller beautifully calls—these " images of God cut in ebony." But I should not like to associate with them, to share my meals and my good nights with them—because they are black.

I love Quaker ways, and Quaker worship. I venerate the Quaker principles. It does me good for the rest of the day when I meet any of their people in my path. When I am ruffled or disturbed by any occurrence, the sight, or quiet voice of a Quaker, acts upon me as a ventilator, lightening the air, and taking off a load from the bosom. But I cannot like the Quakers (as Desdemona would say) " to live with them." I am all over sophisticated—with humors, fancies, craving hourly sympathy. I must have books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scandal, jokes, ambiguities, and a thousand whim-whams, which their simpler taste can do without. I should starve at their primitive banquet. My appetites are too high for the salads which (according to Evelyn) Eve dressed for the angel; my gusto too excited

" To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse."

The indirect answers which Quakers are often found to return to a question put to them may be explained, I think, without the vulgar assumption that they are more given to evasion and equivocating than other people. They naturally look to their words more carefully, and are more cautious of committing themselves. They have a peculiar character to keep up on this head. They stand in a manner upon their veracity. A Quaker is by law exempted from taking an oath. The custom of resorting to an oath in extreme cases, sanctified as it is by all religious antiquity, is apt (it must be confessed) to introduce into the laxer sort of minds the notion of two kinds of truth—

the one applicable to the solemn affairs of justice, and the other to the common proceedings of daily intercourse. As truth bound upon the conscience by an oath can be but truth, so in the common affirmations of the shop and the market-place a latitude is expected and conceded upon questions wanting this solemn covenant. Something less than truth satisfies. It is common to hear a person say, "You do not expect me to speak as if I were upon my oath." Hence a great deal of incorrectness and inadvertency, short of falsehood, creeps into ordinary conversation; and a kind of secondary or laic-truth is tolerated, where clergy-truth—oath-truth—by the nature of the circumstances, is not required. A Quaker knows none of this distinction. His simple affirmation being received, upon the most sacred occasions, without any further test, stamps a value upon the words which he is to use upon the most indifferent topics of life. He looks to them naturally with more severity. You can have of him no more than his word. He knows, if he is caught tripping in a casual expression, he forfeits, for himself at least, his claim to the invidious exemption. He knows that his syllables are weighed—and how far a consciousness of this particular watchfulness, exerted against a person, has a tendency to produce indirect answers, and a diverting of the question by honest means, might be illustrated, and the practice justified, by a more sacred example than is proper to be adduced upon this occasion. The admirable presence of mind, which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies, might be traced to this imposed self-watchfulness—if it did not seem rather an humble and secular scion of that old stock of religious constancy, which never bent or faltered, in the Primitive Friends, or gave way to the winds of persecution, to the violence of judge or accuser, under trials and racking examinations. "You will never be the wiser, if I sit here answering your questions till midnight," said one of those upright justicers to Penn, who had been putting law cases with a puzzling subtlety. "Thereafter as the answers may be," retorted the Quaker. The astonishing composure of this people is sometimes ludicrously displayed in lighter instances. I was travelling in a stage-coach with three male Quakers, buttoned up in the straitest nonconformity of their sect. We stopped to bait at Andover, where a meal, partly tea apparatus, partly supper, was set before us. My friends

confined themselves to the tea-table. I in my way took supper. When the landlady brought in the bill, the eldest of my companions discovered that she had charged for both meals. This was resisted. Mine hostess was very clamorous and positive. Some mild arguments were used on the part of the Quakers, for which the heated mind of the good lady seemed by no means a fit recipient. The guard came in with his usual peremptory notice. The Quakers pulled out their money and formally tendered it—so much for tea; I, in humble imitation, tendering mine—for the supper which I had taken. She would not relax in her demand. So they all three quietly put up their silver, as did myself, and marched out of the room, the eldest and gravest going first, with myself closing up the rear, who thought I could not do better than follow the example of such grave and warrantable personages. We got in. The steps went up. The coach drove off. The murmurs of mine hostess, not very indistinctly or ambiguously pronounced, became after a time inaudible—and now my conscience, which the whimsical scene had for a while suspended, beginning to give some twitches, I waited in the hope that some justification would be offered by these serious persons for the seeming injustice of their conduct. To my great surprise, not a syllable was dropped on the subject. They sat as mute as at a meeting. At length the eldest of them broke silence, by inquiring of his next neighbor, "Hast thee heard how indigos go at the India House?" and the question operated as a soporific on my moral feeling as far as Exeter.

ALL-FOOLS' DAY

THE compliments of the season to my worthy masters, and a merry first of April to us all!

Many happy returns of this day to you—and you and you, sir—nay, never frown, man, nor put a long face upon the matter. Do not we know one another? what need of ceremony among friends? we have all a touch of that same—you understand me—a speck of the motley. Beshrew the man who on such a day as this, the "general festival," should affect to stand aloof. I am none of those sneakers. I am free of the corporation, and care not who knows it. He that meets me in the forest to-day, shall meet with no wiseacre, I can tell him. *Stultus sum.* Translate me that, and take the meaning of it to yourself for your pains. What, man! we have four quarters of the globe on our side, at the least computation.

Fill us a cup of that sparkling gooseberry—we will drink no wise, melancholy, politic port on this day—and let us troll the catch of Amiens [1]—*duc ad me—duc ad me*—how goes it?

> Here shall he see,
> Gross fools as he.

Now would I give a trifle to know, historically and authentically, who was the greatest fool that ever lived. I would certainly give him a bumper. Marry, of the present breed, I think I could without much difficulty name you the party.

Remove your cap a little further, if you please: it hides my bauble. And now each man bestride his hobby, and dust away his bells to what tune he pleases. I will give you, for my part,

> The crazy old church clock,
> And the bewildered chimes.

Good master Empedocles,[2] you are welcome. It is long since you went a salamander-gathering down Ætna. Worse than

[1] "As You Like It," ii. 5.

[2] This portion of the essay was apparently suggested by Milton's account of the Paradise of Fools, "Paradise Lost," iii. 471.

samphire-picking by some odds. 'Tis a mercy your worship did not singe your mustachios.

Ha, Cleombrotus![3] and what salads in faith did you light upon at the bottom of the Mediterranean? You were founder, I take it, of the disinterested sect of the Calenturists.[4]

Gebir,[5] my old freemason, and prince of plasterers at Babel, bring in your trowel, most Ancient Grand! You have claim to a seat here at my right hand, as patron of the stammerers. You left your work, if I remember Herodotus correctly, at eight hundred million toises,[6] or thereabout, above the level of the sea. Bless us, what a long bell-rope you must have pulled, to call your top workmen to their luncheon on the low grounds of Shinar. Or did you send up your garlic and onions by a rocket? I am a rogue if I am not ashamed to show you our Monument on Fish-street Hill, after your altitudes. Yet we think it somewhat.

What, the magnanimous Alexander in tears?—cry, baby, put its finger in its eye, it shall have another globe, round as an orange, pretty moppet!

Mister Adams[7]—'odso, I honor your coat—pray do us the favor to read to us that sermon, which you lent to Mistress Slipslop—the twenty and second in your portmanteau there—on female incontinence—the same—it will come in most irrelevantly and impertinently seasonable to the time of day.

Good Master Raymond Lully[8] you look wise. Pray correct that error.

Duns,[9] spare your definitions. I must fine you a bumper, or a paradox. We will have nothing said or done syllogistically this day. Remove those logical forms, waiter, that no gentleman break the tender shins of his apprehension stumbling across them.

[3] A native of Ambracia, who flung himself into the sea after reading Plato "On Immortality."

[4] Calenture is a tropical fever which sometimes produces in sailors a hallucination that causes them to leap overboard.

[5] Jabir ibn Haijan, an Arabian alchemist of the eighth century. Landor, in his poem "Gebir," following the example of Clara Reeve's "Progress of Romance," makes Gebir a character of ancient Egyptian history, and adds the fact that he was punished by heaven for his attempt to build a city. Hence Lamb's association of Gebir with Babel.

[6] A toise equals 6.395 English feet.

[7] Parson Adams and Mrs. Slipslop are characters in Fielding's "Joseph Andrews." The former suggested the Vicar of Wakefield.

[8] The "enlightened doctor" (1234-1315), noted for the vanity with which he propounded his fantastic logical doctrines.

[9] Johannes Duns Scotus, Doctor Subtilis (d. 1308), the philosophical opponent of Aquinas.

Master Stephen,[10] you are late.—Ha, Cokes, it is you!—Ague-cheek, my dear knight, let me pay my *devoir* to you.—Master Shallow, your worship's poor servant to command.—Master Silence, I will use few words with you.—Slender, it shall go hard if I edge not you in somewhere. You six will engross all the poor wit of the company to-day.—I know it, I know it.

Ha! honest R—,[11] my fine old Librarian of Ludgate, time out of mind, art thou here again? Bless thy doublet, it is not over-new, threadbare as thy stories;—what dost thou flitting about the world at this rate?—Thy customers are extinct, defunct, bed-rid, have ceased to read long ago.—Thou goest still among them, seeing if, peradventure, thou canst hawk a volume or two.—Good Granville S—,[12] thy last patron is flown.

> "King Pandion, he is dead,
> All thy friends are lapt in lead."[13]

Nevertheless, noble R—, come in, and take your seat here between Armado [14] and Quisada; for in true courtesy, in gravity, in fantastic smiling to thyself, in courteous smiling upon others, in the goodly ornature of well-apparelled speech, and the commendation of wise sentences, thou are nothing inferior to those accomplished dons of Spain. The spirit of chivalry forsake me forever, when I forget thy singing the song of Macheath,[15] which declares that he might be "happy with either," situated between those two ancient spinsters—when I forgot the inimitable formal love which thou didst make, turning now to the one, and now to the other, with that Malvolian smile—as if Cervantes, not Gay, had written it for his hero; and as if thousands of periods must revolve, before the mirror of courtesy could have given his invidious preference between a pair of so goodly propertied and meritorious-equal damsels.

To descend from these altitudes, and not to protract our Fools' Banquet beyond its appropriate day, for I fear the second of April is not many hours' distant—in sober verity I will confess a truth to thee, reader. I love a Fool—as naturally as if I

[10] Stephen is a character in Jonson's "Every Man in his Humour," Cokes in Jonson's "Bartholomew Fair," Ague-cheek in "Twelfth-night," and Shallow and Silence in "King Henry IV."

[11] Ramsay, keeper of the London Library.

[12] Sharp, a well-known abolitionist (1735-1813).

[13] By Rich. Barnfield.

[14] A Spaniard in "Love's Labour's Lost." Quisada is another form of Don Quixote.

[15] The highwayman in Gay's "Beggar's Opera."

were of kith and kin to him. When a child, with childlike apprehensions, that dived not below the surface of the matter, I read those Parables—not guessing at the involved wisdom—I had more yearnings towards that simple architect, that built his house upon the sand, than I entertained for his more cautious neighbor: I grudged at the hard censure pronounced upon the quiet soul that kept his talent; and—prizing their simplicity beyond the more provident, and, to my apprehension, somewhat unfeminine wariness of their competitors—I felt a kindliness, that almost amounted to a *tendre*, for those five thoughtless virgins.—I have never made an acquaintance since, that lasted, or a friendship that answered with any that had not some tincture of the absurd in their characters. I venerate an honest obliquity of understanding. The more laughable blunders a man shall commit in your company, the more tests he giveth you that he will not betray or overreach you. I love the safety which a palpable hallucination warrants; the security, which a word out of reason ratifies. And take my word for this, reader, and say a fool told it you, if you please, that he who hath not a dram of folly in his mixture, hath pounds of much worse matter in his composition. It is observed that "the foolisher the fowl or fish—woodcocks—dotterels—cods' heads, etc., the finer the flesh thereof"; and what are commonly the world's received fools but such whereof the world is not worthy? and what have been some of the kindliest patterns of our species, but so many darlings of absurdity, minions of the goddess, and her white boys?—Reader, if you wrest my words beyond their fair construction, it is you, and not I, that are the April fool.

MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST

A CLEAR fire, a clean hearth,[1] and the rigor of the game —this was the celebrated wish of old Sarah Battle (now with God), who, next to her devotions, loved a good game of whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half-and-half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no; and will desire an adversary, who has slipped a wrong card, to take it up and play another.[2] These insufferable trifiers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul, and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions. She hated favors. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a good fight: cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) "like a dancer." She sate bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side—their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that hearts was her favorite suit.

I never in my life—and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it—saw her take out her snuffbox when it was her

[1] This was before the introduction of rugs, reader. You must remember the intolerable crash of the unswept cinders betwixt your foot and the marble.

[2] As if a sportsman should tell you he liked to kill a fox one day and lose him the next.

turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game; or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced, or connived at, miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards; and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand; and who, in his excess of candor, declared, that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do—and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards—over a book.

Pope was her favorite author: his "Rape of the Lock" her favorite work. She once did me the favor to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of ombre in that poem; and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from, tradrille. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant; and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles;[3] but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners—a thing which the constancy of whist abhors; the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille[4]—absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter give him no proper power above his brother-nobility of the Aces:—the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone; above all, the overpowering attractions of a *sans prendre vole*[5]—to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching in the contingencies of whist;—all these, she would say, make quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the "solider" game—that was her word. It was a long meal; not like

[3] William Lisle Bowles (1762-1850), published an edition of Pope in 1807.
[4] The ace of spades.
[5] A technical phrase in the game of ombre, meaning to win all the possible stakes on the board.

quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever-fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian States, depicted by Machiavel; perpetually changing postures and connections; kissing and scratching in a breath:—but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favorite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage—nothing superfluous. No "flushes"—that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up:—that anyone should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and color, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colors of things. Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have a uniformity of array to distinguish them: but what should we say to a foolish 'squire, who should claim a merit from dressing up his tenantry in red jackets, that never were to be marshalled—never to take the field? She even wished that whist were more simple than it is; and, in my mind, would have stripped it of some appendages, which, in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably, allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps? Why two colors, when the mark of the suit would have sufficiently distinguished them without it?

"But the eye, my dear madam, is agreeably refreshed with the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason—he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your Quaker spirit of unsensualizing would have kept out. You yourself have a pretty collection of paintings—but confess to me, whether, walking in

your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandykes, or among the Paul Potters in the ante-room, you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to that you have it in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court-cards?—the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession—the gay triumph-assuring scarlets—the contrasting deadly killing sables—the 'hoary majesty of spades'—Pam[6] in all his glory!

"All these might be dispensed with; and with their naked names upon the drab pasteboard, the game might go on very well, pictureless. But the beauty of cards would be extinguished forever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling. Imagine a dull deal board, or drumhead, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature's), fittest arena for those courtly combatants to play their gallant jousts and tourneys in! Exchange those delicately turned ivory markers—(work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol—or as profanely slighting their true application as the arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess)—exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors' money), or chalk and a slate!"

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic; and to her approbation of my arguments on her favorite topic that evening, I have always fancied myself indebted for the legacy of a curious cribbage-board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (old Walter Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated) brought with him from Florence:—this, and a trifle of £500, came to me at her death.

The former bequest (which I do not least value) I have kept with religious care; though she herself, to confess a truth, was never greatly taken with cribbage. It was an essentially vulgar game, I have heard her say—disputing with her uncle, who was very partial to it. She would never heartily bring her mouth to pronounce 'Go," or "That's a go." She called it an ungrammatical game. The pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five-dollar stake) because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must have claimed by

[6] A term for the knave of clubs in the game of loo.

the disgraceful tenure of declaring "Two for his heels." There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms—such as pique—repique—the capot—they savored (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She loved the quadrate or square. She would argue thus:—Cards are warfare: the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war, in disguise of a sport: when single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves, it is too close a fight; with spectators, it is not much bettered. No looker-on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money; he cares not for your luck sympathetically, or for your play. Three are still worse; a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cribbage, without league or alliance; or a rotation of petty and contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues, and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in tradrille. But in square games (she meant whist), all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honor, common to every species —though the latter can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games, where the spectator is only feebly a participator. But the parties in whist are spectators and principals, too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neutrality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold—or even an interested—bystander witnesses it, but because your partner sympathizes in the contingency. You win for two, you triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing to two are better reconciled, than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game. By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favorite pastime.

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any

game, where chance entered into the composition, for nothing. Chance, she would argue—and here, again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion—chance is nothing; but where something else depends upon it. It is obvious that cannot be glory. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself, or before spectators, where no stake was depending? Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number, and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively without a prize? Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in backgammon, where it was not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of overreaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one man's wit—his memory, or combination faculty rather—against another's; like a mock engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless. She could not conceive a game wanting the spritely infusion of chance, the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a room, whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with insufferable horror and *ennui*. Those well-cut similitudes of castles and knights, the "imagery" of the board, she would argue (and I think in this case justly), were entirely misplaced and senseless. Those hard-head contests can in no instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and color. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort, that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other—that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards: that cards are a temporary illusion; in truth, a mere drama; for we do but play at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during the illusion, we are as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado; great battling, and little bloodshed; mighty means for disproportioned ends: quite as diverting, and a great deal

more innoxious, than many of those more serious games of life, which men play without esteeming them to be such.

With great deference to the old lady's judgment in these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life, when playing at cards for nothing has even been agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes call for the cards, and play a game at piquet for love, with my cousin Bridget—Bridget Elia.[7]

I grant there is something sneaking in it; but with a tooth-ache, or a sprained ankle—when you are subdued and humble—you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as "sick whist."

I grant it is not the highest style of man—I deprecate the manes of Sarah Battle—she lives not, alas! to whom I should apologize.

At such times, those terms which my old friend objected to, come in as something admissible. I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me.

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted her)—(dare I tell thee how foolish I am?)—I wished it might have lasted forever, though we gained nothing, and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly forever. The pipkin should be ever boiling, that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over; and, as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

[7] The essayist's sister, Mary Lamb.

DREAM-CHILDREN: A REVERIE

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when they were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle, or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field,[1] who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived), which had been the scene—so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country—of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the "Children in the Wood." Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts; till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if someone were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up

[1] Mary Field, the essayist's grandmother.

in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, " that would be foolish, indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighborhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good, indeed, that she knew all the Psaltry by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer—here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till, upon my looking grave, it desisted—the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said, " those innocents would do her no harm "; and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she—and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren, having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the twelve Cæsars, that had been emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out —sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me—and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them—and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy looking yew-trees, or the firs, and

picking up the red berries, and the fir-apples, which were good for nothing but to look at—or in lying about on the fresh grass with all the fine garden smells around me—or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth—or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings—I had more pleasure in those busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavors of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such-like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then, in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L—,[2] because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us; and instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make him carry him half over the country in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out—and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries—and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy—for he was a good bit older than me—many a mile when I could not walk for pain;—and how in after-life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed, and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but

[2] Elia's brother, who died in 1821, the year before the publication of this essay in the "London Magazine."

afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he, their poor uncle, must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for Uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W—n;[3] and as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial, meant in maidens—when suddenly turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of representment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding, till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech: "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum[4] father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence, and a name"—and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm-chair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side—but John L—(or James Elia) was gone forever.

[3] Alice Winterton, the name under which Lamb alludes in his essays to his first love, Ann Simmons.

[4] Bartrum was the real name of the husband of "Alice W—n."

THE CONVALESCENT

A PRETTY severe fit of indisposition which, under the name of a nervous fever, has made a prisoner of me for some weeks past, and is but slowly leaving me, has reduced me to an incapacity of reflecting upon any topic foreign to itself. Expect no healthy conclusions from me this month, reader; I can offer you only sick men's dreams.

And truly the whole state of sickness is such; for what else is it but a magnificent dream for a man to lie abed, and draw daylight curtains about him; and, shutting out the sun, to induce a total oblivion of all the works which are going on under it? To become insensible to all the operations of life, except the beatings of one feeble pulse?

If there be a regal solitude, it is a sick-bed. How the patient lords it there; what caprices he acts without control! how king-like he sways his pillow—tumbling, and tossing, and shifting, and lowering, and thumping, and flatting, and moulding it, to the ever-varying requisitions of his throbbing temples!

He changes sides oftener than a politician. Now he lies full length, then half length, obliquely, transversely, head and feet quite across the bed; and none accuses him of tergiversation. Within the four curtains he is absolute. They are his *Mare Clausum.*

How sickness enlarges the dimensions of a man's self to himself! He is his own exclusive object. Supreme selfishness is inculcated upon him as his only duty. 'Tis the Two Tables of the Law to him. He has nothing to think of but how to get well. What passes out of doors, or within them, so he hear not the jarring of them, affects him not.

A little while ago he was greatly concerned in the event of a lawsuit, which was to be the making or the marring of his dearest friend. He was to be seen trudging about upon this man's errand to fifty quarters of the town at once, jogging this

witness, refreshing that solicitor. The cause was to come on yesterday. He is absolutely as indifferent to the decision as if it were a question to be tried at Pekin. Peradventure from some whispering, going on about the house, not intended for his hearing, he picks up enough to make him understand that things went cross-grained in the court yesterday, and his friend is ruined. But the word "friend" and the word "ruin" disturb him no more than so much jargon. He is not to think of anything but how to get better.

What a world of foreign cares are merged in that absorbing consideration!

He has put on the strong armor of sickness, he is wrapped in the callous hide of suffering; he keeps his sympathy, like some curious vintage, under trusty lock and key, for his own use only.

He lies pitying himself, honing and moaning to himself; he yearneth over himself; his bowels are even melted within him, to think what he suffers; he is not ashamed to weep over himself.

He is forever plotting how to do some good to himself; studying little stratagems and artificial alleviations.

He makes the most of himself; dividing himself, by an allowable fiction, into as many distinct individuals as he hath sore and sorrowing members. Sometimes he meditates—as of a thing apart from him—upon his poor aching head, and that dull pain which, dozing or waking, lay in it all the past night like a log, or palpable substance of pain, not to be removed without opening the very skull, as it seemed, to take it thence. Or he pities his long, clammy, attenuated fingers. He compassionates himself all over; and his bed is a very discipline of humanity, and tender heart.

He is his own sympathizer; and instinctively feels that none can so well perform that office for him. He cares for few spectators to his tragedy. Only that punctual face of the old nurse pleases him, that announces his broths and his cordials. He likes it because it is so unmoved, and because he can pour forth his feverish ejaculations before it as unreservedly as to his bedpost.

To the world's business he is dead. He understands not what the callings and occupations of mortals are; only he has a glimmering conceit of some such thing, when the doctor

makes his daily call; and even in the lines on that busy face he reads no multiplicity of patients, but solely conceives of himself as "the sick man." To what other uneasy couch the good man is hastening, when he slips out of his chamber, folding up his thin *douceur* so carefully, for fear of rustling—is no speculation which he can at present entertain. He thinks only of the regular return of the same phenomenon at the same hour to-morrow.

Household rumors touch him not. Some faint murmur, indicative of life going on within the house, soothes him, while he knows not distinctly what it is. He is not to know anything, not to think of anything. Servants gliding up or down the distant staircase, treading as upon velvet, gently keep his ear awake, so long as he troubles not himself further than with some feeble guess at their errands. Exacter knowledge would be a burden to him; he can just endure the pressure of conjecture. He opens his eye faintly at the dull stroke of the muffled knocker, and closes it again without asking "Who was it?" He is flattered by a general notion that inquiries are making after him, but he cares not to know the name of the inquirer. In the general stillness, and awful hush of the house, he lies in state, and feels his sovereignty.

To be sick is to enjoy monarchial prerogatives. Compare the silent tread and quiet ministry, almost by the eye only, with which he is served—with the careless demeanor, the unceremonious goings in and out (slapping of doors, or leaving them open) of the very same attendants, when he is getting a little better—and you will confess that from the bed of sickness (throne let me rather call it) to the elbow-chair of convalescence, is a fall from dignity, amounting to a deposition.

How convalescence shrinks a man back to his pristine stature! Where is now the space, which he occupied so lately, in his own, in the family's eye?

The scene of his regalities, his sick-room, which was his presence chamber, where he lay and acted his despotic fancies—how is it reduced to a common bedroom! The trimness of the very bed has something petty and unmeaning of it. It is made every day. How unlike to that wavy, many-furrowed, oceanic surface, which it presented so short a time since, when to make it was a service not to be thought of at oftener than three- or

four-day revolutions, when the patient was with pain and grief to be lifted for a little while out of it, to submit to the encroachments of unwelcome neatness, and decencies which his shaken frame deprecated; then to be lifted into it again, for another three or four days' respite, to flounder it out of shape again, while every fresh furrow was a historical record of some shifting posture, some uneasy turning, some seeking for a little ease; and the shrunken skin scarce told a truer story than the crumpled coverlid.

Hushed are those mysterious sighs—those groans—so much more awful, while we knew not from what caverns of vast hidden suffering they proceeded. The Lernean pangs are quenched. The riddle of sickness is solved; and Philoctetes is become an ordinary personage.

Perhaps some relic of the sick man's dream of greatness survives in the still lingering visitations of the medical attendant. But how is he, too, changed with everything else? Can this be he—this man of news—of chat—of anecdote—of everything but physic—can this be he, who so lately came between the patient and his cruel enemy, as on some solemn embassy from Nature, erecting himself into a high meditating party?—Pshaw! 'tis some old woman.

Farewell with him all that made sickness pompous—the spell that hushed the household—the desert-like stillness, felt throughout its inmost chambers—the mute attendance—the inquiry by looks—the still softer delicacies of self-attention—the sole and single eye of distemper alonely fixed upon itself—world-thoughts excluded—the man a world unto himself—his own theatre—

> What a speck is he dwindled into!

In this flat swamp of convalescence, left by the ebb of sickness, yet far enough from the *terra-firma* of established health, your note, dear Editor, reached me, requesting—an article. *In Articulo Mortis*, thought I; but it is something hard—and the quibble, wretched as it was, relieved me. The summons, unseasonable as it appeared, seemed to link me on again to the petty businesses of life, which I had lost sight of; a gentle call to activity, however trivial; a wholesome weaning from that preposterous dream of self-absorption—the puffy state of sick-

ness—in which I confess to have lain so long, insensible to the magazines and monarchies of the world alike; to its laws, and to its literature. The hypochondriac flatus is subsiding; the acres, which in imagination I had spread over—for the sick man swells in the sole contemplation of his single sufferings, till he becomes a Tityus to himself—are wasting to a span, and for the giant of self-importance, which I was so lately, you have me once again in my natural pretensions—the lean and meagre figure of your insignificant essayist.

DETACHED THOUGHTS ON BOOKS AND READING

"To mind the inside of a book is to entertain one's self with the forced product of another man's brain. Now, I think a man of quality and breeding may be much amused with the natural sprouts of his own."—*Lord Foppington,* in "The Relapse."[1]

AN ingenious acquaintance of my own was so much struck with this bright sally of his Lordship, that he has left off reading altogether, to the great improvement of his originality. At the hazard of losing some credit on this head, I must confess that I dedicate no inconsiderable portion of my time to other people's thoughts. I dream away my life in others' speculations. I love to lose myself in other men's minds. When I am not walking, I am reading; I cannot sit and think. Books think for me.

I have no repugnances. Shaftesbury is not too genteel for me, nor Jonathan Wild too low. I can read anything which I call "a book." There are things in that shape which I cannot allow for such.

In this catalogue of "books which are no books"—*biblia-a-biblia*—I reckon court calendars, directories, pocket-books, draught-boards, bound and lettered on the back, scientific treatises, almanacs, statutes-at-large: the works of Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, Beattie, Soame Jenyns,[2] and generally all those volumes which "no gentleman's library should be without": the histories of Flavius Josephus (that learned Jew), and Paley's moral philosophy. With these exceptions, I can read almost anything. I bless my stars for a taste so catholic, so unexcluding.

I confess that it moves my spleen to see these "things in books' clothing" perched upon shelves, like false saints,

[1] A play by Sir John Vanbrugh, 1697.

[2] 1704-1787. Author of "A Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil."

usurpers of true shrines, intruders into the sanctuary, thrusting out the legitimate occupants. To reach down a well-bound semblance of a volume, and hope it some kind-hearted play-book, then, opening what "seem its leaves," to come bolt upon a withering Population Essay. To expect a Steele or a Farquhar, and find—Adam Smith. To view a well-arranged assortment of blockheaded encyclopædias (Anglicanas or Metropolitanas) set out in an array of russia, or morocco, when a tithe of that good leather would comfortably reclothe my shivering folios, would renovate Paracelsus himself, and enable old Raymund Lully to look like himself again in the world. I never see these impostors, but I long to strip them, to warm my ragged veterans in their spoils.

To be strong-backed and neat-bound is the *desideratum* of a volume. Magnificence comes after. This, when it can be afforded, is not to be lavished upon all kinds of books indiscriminately. I would not dress a set of magazines, for instance, in full suit. The dishabille, or half binding (with russia backs ever) is our costume. A Shakespeare or a Milton (unless the first editions), it were mere foppery to trick out in gay apparel. The possession of them confers no distinction. The exterior of them (the things themselves being so common), strange to say, raises no sweet emotions, no tickling sense of property in the owner. Thomson's "Seasons," again, looks best (I maintain it) a little torn and dog's-eared. How beautiful to a genuine lover of reading are the sullied leaves, and worn-out appearance, nay, the very odor (beyond russia), if we would not forget kind feelings in fastidiousness, of an old "circulating-library" Tom Jones or Vicar of Wakefield! How they speak of the thousand thumbs that have turned over their pages with delight!—of the lone sempstress, whom they may have cheered (milliner, or hard-working mantua-maker) after her long day's needle-toil, running far into midnight, when she has snatched an hour, ill spared from sleep, to steep her cares, as in some Lethean cup, in spelling out their enchanting contents! Who would have them a whit less soiled? What better condition could we desire to see them in?

In some respects the better a book is, the less it demands from binding. Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, and all that class of perpetually self-reproductive volumes—Great Nature's Stereo-

types—we see them individually perish with less regret, because we know the copies of them to be "*eterne*." But where a book is at once both good and rare—where the individual is almost the species, and when that perishes,

> "We know not where is that Promethean torch
> That can its light relumine"—

such a book, for instance, as the "Life of the Duke of Newcastle," by his duchess—no casket is rich enough, no casing sufficiently durable, to honor and keep safe such a jewel.

Not only rare volumes of this description, which seem hopeless ever to be reprinted, but old editions of writers, such as Sir Philip Sidney, Bishop Taylor, Milton in his prose works, Fuller—of whom we have reprints, yet the books themselves, though they go about, and are talked of here and there, we know have not endenizened themselves (nor possibly ever will) in the national heart, so as to become stock books—it is good to possess these in good and costly covers. I don't care for a First-folio of Shakespeare. (You cannot make a "pet" book of an author whom everybody reads.) I rather prefer the common editions of Rowe and Tonson, without notes, and with "plates," which, being so execrably bad, serve as maps or modest remembrancers, to the text; and, without pretending to any supposable emulation with it, are so much better than the Shakespeare-gallery engravings which did. I have a community of feeling with my countrymen about his plays, and I like those editions of him best which have been oftenest tumbled about and handled. On the contrary I cannot read Beaumont and Fletcher but in folio. The octavo editions are painful to look at, I have no sympathy with them. If they were as much read as the current editions of the other poet, I should prefer them in that shape to the older one. I do not know a more heartless sight than the reprint of the "Anatomy of Melancholy." What need was there of unearthing the bones of that fantastic old great man, to expose them in a winding-sheet of the newest fashion to modern censure? what hapless stationer could dream of Burton ever becoming popular? The wretched Malone could not do worse, when he bribed the sexton of Stratford Church to let him whitewash the painted effigy of old Shakespeare, which stood there, in rude but lively fashion depicted, to the very color

of the cheek, the eye, the eyebrow, hair, the very dress he used to wear—the only authentic testimony we had, however imperfect, of these curious parts and parcels of him. They covered him over with a coat of white paint. By —, if I had been a justice of peace for Warwickshire, I would have clapt both commentator and sexton fast in the stocks, for a pair of meddling sacrilegious varlets.

I think I see them at their work—these sapient trouble-tombs.

Shall I be thought fantastical if I confess that the names of some of our poets sound sweeter, and have a finer relish to the ear—to mine, at least—than that of Milton or of Shakespeare? It may be that the latter are more staled and rung upon in common discourse. The sweetest names, and which carry a perfume in the mention, are Kit Marlowe, Drayton, Drummond of Hawthornden, and Cowley.

Much depends upon when and where you read a book. In the five or six impatient minutes, before the dinner is quite ready, who would think of taking up the "Faerie Queene" for a stop-gap, or a volume of Bishop Andrewes's [8] sermons?

Milton almost requires a solemn service of music to be played before you enter upon him. But he brings his music, to which, who listens, had need bring docile thoughts, and purged ears.

Winter evenings—the world shut out—with less of ceremony the gentle Shakespeare enters. At such a season the "Tempest," or his own "Winter's Tale."

These two poets you cannot avoid reading aloud—to yourself, or (as it chances) to some single person listening. More than one—and it degenerates into an audience.

Books of quick interest, that hurry on for incidents, are for the eye to glide over only. It will not do to read them out. I could never listen to even the better kind of modern novels without extreme irksomeness.

A newspaper, read out, is intolerable. In some of the bank offices it is the custom (to save so much individual time) for one of the clerks—who is the best scholar—to commence upon the "Times" or the "Chronicle" and recite its entire contents aloud, *pro bono publico*. With every advantage of lungs and elocution, the effect is singularly vapid. In barbers' shops

[8] Bishop of Winchester. His sermons were published in 1628.

and public-houses, a fellow will get up and spell out a paragraph, which he communicates as some discovery. Another follows, with his selection. So the entire journal transpires at length by piecemeal. Seldom-readers are slow readers, and without this expedient, no one in the company would probably ever travel through the contents of a whole paper.

Newspapers always excite curiosity. No one ever lays one down without a feeling of disappointment.

What an eternal time that gentleman in black, at Nando's,[4] keeps the paper! I am sick of hearing the waiter bawling out incessantly, "The 'Chronicle' is in hand, sir."

(As in these little diurnals I generally skip the foreign news, the debates, and the politics, I find the "Morning Herald" by far the most entertaining of them. It is an agreeable miscellany rather than a newspaper.)

Coming into an inn at night—having ordered your supper—what can be more delightful than to find lying in the window-seat, left there time out of mind by the carelessness of some former guest—two or three numbers of the old "Town and Country Magazine," with its amusing *tête-à-tête* pictures—"The Royal Lover and Lady G—," "The Melting Platonic and the Old Beau"—and such like antiquated scandal? Would you exchange it—at that time, and in that place—for a better book?

Poor Tobin,[5] who latterly fell blind, did not regret it so much for the weightier kinds of reading—the "Paradise Lost" or "Comus," he could have read to him—but he missed the pleasure of skimming over with his own eye a magazine, or a light pamphlet.

I should not care to be caught in the serious avenues of some cathedral alone, and reading "Candide."

I do not remember a more whimsical surprise than having been once detected—by a familiar damsel—reclined at my ease upon the grass, on Primrose Hill (her Cythera), reading—"Pamela." There was nothing in the book to make a man seriously ashamed at the exposure; but as she seated herself down by me, and seemed determined to read in company, I could have wished it had been—any other book. We read on very sociably for a few pages; and, not finding the author much to her taste, she got up, and—went away. Gentle casuist, I

[4] A coffee-house at 17 Fleet-street. [5] John Tobin, a dramatist (1770-1804).

leave it to thee to conjecture, whether the blush (for there was one between us) was the property of the nymph or the swain in this dilemma. From me you shall never get the secret.

I am not much of a friend to out-of-doors reading. I cannot settle my spirits to it. I knew a Unitarian minister, who was generally to be seen upon Snow Hill (as yet Skinner's Street was not), between the hours of ten and eleven in the morning, studying a volume of Lardner.[6] I own this to have been a strain of abstraction beyond my reach. I used to admire how he sidled along, keeping clear of secular contacts. An illiterate encounter with a porter's knot, or a bread-basket, would have quickly put to flight all the theology I am master of, and have left me worse than indifferent to the five points.

(I was once amused—there is a pleasure in affecting affectation—at the indignation of a crowd that was jostling in with me at the pit-door of Covent Garden Theatre, to have a sight of Master Betty—then at once in his dawn and his meridian—in "Hamlet." I had been invited, quite unexpectedly, to join a party, whom I met near the door of the playhouse, and I happened to have in my hand a large octavo of Johnson and Steevens's "Shakespeare," which, the time not admitting of my carrying it home, of course went with me to the theatre. Just in the very heat and pressure of the doors opening—the "rush," as they term it—I deliberately held the volume over my head, open at the scene in which the young Roscius had been most cried up, and quietly read by the lamp-light. The clamor became universal. "The affectation of the fellow," cried one. "Look at that gentleman reading, papa," squeaked a young lady, who, in her admiration of the novelty, almost forgot her fears. I read on. "He ought to have his book knocked out of his hand," exclaimed a pursy cit, whose arms were too fast pinioned to his side to suffer him to execute his kind intention. Still I read on—and, till the time came to pay my money, kept as unmoved as Saint Anthony at his holy offices, with the satyrs, apes, and hobgoblins mopping and making mouths at him, in the picture, while the good man sits as undisturbed at the sight as if he were the sole tenant of the desert. The individual rabble [I recognized more than one of their ugly faces] had damned a slight piece of mine a few nights before, and I was determined

[6] A theological writer (1684-1768).

the culprits should not a second time put me out of countenance.)

There is a class of street readers, whom I can never contemplate without affection—the poor gentry, who, not having wherewithal to buy or hire a book, filch a little learning at the open stalls—the owner, with his hard eye, casting envious looks at them all the while, and thinking when they will have done. Venturing tenderly, page after page, expecting every moment when he shall interpose his interdict, and yet unable to deny themselves the gratification, they "snatch a fearful joy." Martin B—[7] in this way, by daily fragments, got through two volumes of "Clarissa," when the stallkeeper damped his laudable ambition, by asking him (it was in his younger days) whether he meant to purchase the work. M. declares that under no circumstance in his life did he ever peruse a book with half the satisfaction which he took in those uneasy snatches. A quaint poetess [8] of our day has moralized upon this subject in two very touching but homely stanzas:

"I saw a boy with eager eye
Open a book upon a stall,
And read, as he'd devour it all;
Which, when the stall-man did espy,
Soon to the boy I heard him call,
'You, sir, you never buy a book,
Therefore in one you shall not look.'
The boy pass'd slowly on, and, with a sigh,
He wish'd he never had been taught to read,
Then of the old churl's books he should have had no need.

"Of sufferings the poor have many,
Which never can the rich annoy.
I soon perceived another boy,
Who look'd as if he had not any
Food, for that day at least—enjoy
The sight of cold meat in a tavern larder.
This boy's case, then thought I, is surely harder,
Thus hungry, longing, thus without a penny,
Beholding choice of dainty-dressed meat:
No wonder if he wished he ne'er had learn'd to eat."

[7] The son of Admiral Burney, an intimate friend of Lamb. [8] Mary Lamb.

REJOICINGS UPON THE NEW YEAR'S COMING OF AGE

THE *Old Year* being dead, and the *New Year* coming of age, which he does, by calendar law, as soon as the breath is out of the old gentleman's body, nothing would serve the young spark but he must give a dinner upon the occasion, to which all the *Days* in the year were invited. The *Festivals,* whom he deputed as his stewards, were mightily taken with the notion. They had been engaged time out of mind, they said, in providing mirth and good-cheer for mortals below; and it was time they should have a taste of their own bounty. It was stiffly debated among them whether the *Fasts* should be admitted. Some said the appearance of such lean, starved guests, with their mortified faces, would pervert the ends of the meeting. But the objection was overruled by *Christmas Day,* who had a design upon *Ash Wednesday* (as you shall hear), and a mighty desire to see how the old Domine would behave himself in his cups. Only the *Vigils* were requested to come with their lanterns, to light the gentlefolks home at night.

All the *Days* came to their day. Covers were provided for 365 guests at the principal table, with an occasional knife and fork at the sideboard for the *Twenty-ninth of February.*

I should have told you that cards of invitation had been issued. The carriers were the *Hours:* twelve little, merry, whirligig foot-pages, as you should desire to see, that went all round, and found out the persons invited well enough, with the exception of *Easter Day, Shrove Tuesday,* and a few such *Movables,* who had lately shifted their quarters.

Well, they all met at last—foul *Days,* fine *Days,* all sorts of *Days,* and a rare din they made of it. There was nothing but, Hail! fellow *Day,* well met—brother *Day*—sister *Day*—only *Lady Day* kept a little on the aloof, and seemed somewhat

scornful. Yet some said *Twelfth Day* cut her out and out, for she came in a tiffany suit, white and gold, like a queen on a frostcake, all royal, glittering, and *Epiphanous*. The rest came, some in green, some in white—but old *Lent and his family* were not yet out of mourning. Rainy *Days* came in, dripping; and sunshiny *Days* helped them to change their stockings. *Wedding Day* was there in his marriage finery, a little the worse for wear. *Pay Day* came late, as he always does; and *Doomsday* sent word—he might be expected.

April Fool (as my young lord's jester) took upon himself to marshal the guests, and wild work he made with it. It would have posed old Erra Pater[1] to have found out any given *Day* in the year to erect a scheme upon—good *Days*, bad *Days*, were so shuffled together, to the confounding of all sober horoscopy.

He had stuck the *Twenty-first of June* next to the *Twenty-second of December*, and the former looked like a maypole siding a marrow-bone. *Ash Wednesday* got wedged in (as was concerted) betwixt *Christmas* and *Lord Mayor's Day*. Lord! how he laid about him! Nothing but barons of beef and turkeys would go down with him—to the great greasing and detriment of his new sackcloth bib and tucker. And still *Christmas Day* was at his elbow, plying with him the wassail-bowl, till he roared and hiccupp'd, and protested there was no faith in dried ling, but commended it to the devil for a sour, windy, acrimonious, censorious, hy-po-crit-crit—critical mess, and no dish for a gentleman. Then he dipped his fist into the middle of the great custard that stood before his left-hand neighbor, and daubed his hungry beard all over with it, till you would have taken him for the *Last Day in December*, it so hung in icicles.

At another part of the table *Shrove Tuesday* was helping the *Second of September* to some cock broth, which courtesy the latter returned with the delicate thigh of a hen pheasant—so there was no love lost for that matter. The *Last of Lent* was sponging upon *Shrove-tide's* pancakes; which *April Fool* perceiving, told him that he did well, for pancakes were proper to a *good fry-day*.

In another part, a hubbub arose about the *Thirtieth of Jan-*

[1] A proverbial name for an almanac; *cf.* "Hudibras," pt. I. can. i. l. 120.

uary, who, it seems, being a sour, puritanic character, that thought nobody's meat good or sanctified enough for him, had smuggled into the room a calf's head,[2] which he had had cooked at home for that purpose, thinking to feast thereon incontinently; but as it lay in the dish, *March Manyweathers,* who is a very fine lady, and subject to the megrims, screamed out there was a "'human head' in the platter," and raved about Herodias's daughter to that degree that the obnoxious viand was obliged to be removed, nor did she recover her stomach till she had gulped down a *Restorative,* confected of *Oak Apple,* which the merry *Twenty-ninth of May* always carries about with him for that purpose.

The king's health being called for after this, a notable dispute arose between the *Twelfth of August*[3] (a zealous old Whig gentlewoman) and the *Twenty-third of April*[4] (a newfangled woman of the Tory stamp), as to which of them should have the honor to propose it. *August* grew hot upon the matter, affirming time out of mind the prescriptive right to have lain with her, till her rival had basely supplanted her; whom she represented as little better than a kept mistress who went about in fine clothes, while she (the legitimate Birthday) had scarcely a rag, etc.

April Fool, being made mediator, confirmed the right, in the strongest form of words, to the appellant, but decided for peace' sake that the exercise of it should remain with the present possessor. At the same time, he slyly rounded the first lady in the ear, that an action might lie against the Crown for *bi-geny.*

It beginning to grow a little duskish, *Candlemas* lustily bawled out for lights, which was opposed by all the *Days,* who protested against burning daylight. Then fair water was handed round in silver ewers, and the same lady was observed to take an unusual time in *Washing* herself.

May Day, with that sweetness which is peculiar to her, in a neat speech proposing the health of the founder, crowned her goblet (and by her example the rest of the company) with garlands. This being done, the lordly *New Year,* from the

[2] An allusion to the Calves' Head Club, which celebrated the anniversary of Charles's execution by dining on this dish.

[3] The birthday of George IV.

[4] The festival of St. George.

upper end of the table, in a cordial but somewhat lofty tone, returned thanks. He felt proud on an occasion of meeting so many of his worthy father's late tenants, promised to improve their farms, and at the same time to abate (if anything was found unreasonable) in their rents.

At the mention of this, the four *Quarter Days* involuntarily looked at each other, and smiled; *April Fool* whistled to an old tune of " New Brooms "; and a surly old rebel at the farther end of the table (who was discovered to be no other that the *Fifth of November*) muttered out, distinctly enough to be heard by the whole company, words to this effect—that " when the old one is gone, he is a fool that looks for a better." Which rudeness of his, the guests resenting, unanimously voted his expulsion; and the malcontent was thrust out neck and heels into the cellar, as the properest place for such a *boutefeu* and firebrand as he had shown himself to be.

Order being restored, the young lord (who, to say truth, had been a little ruffled, and put beside his oratory) in as few and yet as obliging words as possible, assured them of entire welcome; and, with a graceful turn, singling out poor *Twenty-ninth of February,* that had sate all this while mumchance at the sideboard, begged to couple his health with that of the good company before him, which he drank accordingly; observing that he had not seen his honest face any time these four years, with a number of endearing expressions besides. At the same time removing the solitary *Day* from the forlorn seat which had been assigned him, he stationed him at his own board, somewhere between the *Greek Calends* and *Latter Lammas.*

Ash Wednesday, being now called upon for a song, with his eyes fast stuck in his head, and as well as the canary he had swallowed would give him leave, struck up a carol, which *Christmas Day* had taught him for the nonce; and was followed by the latter, who gave " Miserere " in fine style, hitting off the mumping notes and lengthened drawl of *Old Mortification* with infinite humor. *April Fool* swore they had exchanged conditions; but *Good Friday* was observed to look extremely grave, and *Sunday* held her fan before her face that she might not be seen to smile.

Shrove-tide, Lord Mayor's Day, and *April Fool* next joined in a glee—

"Which is the properest day to drink?"[5]

in which all the Days chiming in, made a merry burden.

They next fell to quibbles and conundrums. The question being proposed, who had the greatest number of followers? The *Quarter Days* said there could be no question as to that; for they had all the creditors in the world dogging their heels. But *April Fool* gave it in favor of the *Forty Days before Easter;* because the debtors in all cases outnumbered the creditors, and they kept *Lent* all the year.

All this while *Valentine's Day* kept courting pretty *May,* who sate next him, slipping amorous *billets-doux* under the table, till the *Dog Days* (who are naturally of a warm constitution) began to be jealous, and to bark and rage exceedingly. *April Fool,* who likes a bit of sport above measure, and had some pretensions to the lady besides, as being but a cousin once removed, clapped and halloo'd them on; and as fast as their indignation cooled, those mad wags, the *Ember Days,* were at it with their bellows, to blow it into a flame; and all was in a ferment, till old Madam *Septuagesima* (who boasts herself the *Mother of the Days*) wisely diverted the conversation with a tedious tale of the lovers which she could reckon when she was young, and of one, Master *Rogation Day,* in particular, who was forever putting the *question* to her; but she kept him at a distance, as the chronicle would tell, by which I apprehend she meant the Almanac. Then she rambled on to the *Days that were gone,* the *good old Days,* and so to the *Days before the Flood*—which plainly showed her old head to be little better than crazed and doited.

Day being ended, the *Days* called for their cloaks and great-coats, and took their leave. *Lord Mayor's Day* went off in a mist as usual; *Shortest Day* in a deep black fog, that wrapt the little gentleman all round like a hedgehog. Two *Vigils* —so watchmen are called in heaven—saw *Christmas Day* safe home—they had been used to the business before. Another *Vigil*—a stout, sturdy patrol, called the *Eve of St. Christopher* —seeing *Ash Wednesday* in a condition little better than he

[5] The first line of an old Ranelagh catch.

should be, e'en whipt him over his shoulders, pick-a-back fashion; and *Old Mortification* went floating home singing:

"On the bat's back I do fly,"

and a number of old snatches besides, between drunk and sober; but very few Aves or Penitentiaries (you may believe me) were among them. *Longest Day* set off westward in beautiful crimson and gold; the rest, some in one fashion, some in another; but *Valentine* and pretty *May* took their departure together in one of the prettiest silvery twilights a Lover's Day could wish to set in.

PETITION OF THE THUGS FOR TOLERATION

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THE BENEFITS OF PARLIAMENT

—

BY

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

1775—1864

Walter Savage Landor was born at Warwick in 1775. His family, though hardly so distinguished as he imagined it to be, was of considerable antiquity. Few men of letters have ever had greater advantages of position and circumstances. But to Landor they were little else than drawbacks. At Rugby he gained his first classical laurels, but his defiant refusal to ask pardon for a boyish offence caused his dismissal. At Trinity College, Oxford, he fired a fowling-piece into the window of a resident Fellow. For this he was rusticated, and though he might have returned after a temporary exile, he left Oxford forever. After some years spent to but little purpose as a young man of fashion, he became, by the death of his father, the owner of a considerable estate in Monmouthshire. When the Spaniards rose to arms in 1808 he devoted time and money to their cause, receiving in return a colonel's commission. In 1814, on the restoration of Ferdinand VII, he quitted Spain. The experiment of residence on his property was unsuccessful. In 1815, therefore, he left England, and after various changes settled in Florence. In 1835, however, he left his wife and family at Florence, and returned to Bath, where his headquarters were fixed until 1856. In consequence of a miserable libel issued by him in his old age he had to quit England, and his last years were spent at Florence, where he died in 1864.

The reputation of Landor rests chiefly on his "Imaginary Conversations." The first series was published in 1824, and the opinion of Archdeacon Hare that the book "would live as long as English literature lived," was reëchoed by Southey and Wordsworth, and other competent judges. The intense energy of the author's mind, his wide range of reading, and, it must be added, his extreme and passionate view of all political questions, are evident in every page of these dialogues. A second series of "Imaginary Conversations" showed no falling off of his powers, and "Pericles and Aspasia," a more matured but less popular work, exhibits him as perhaps the most successful modern delineator of the manners and thought of ancient Greece.

The style of Landor in poetry and prose is, at times, unequalled. He chiefly excels in manly expression of thought, and in passages of pure pathos. Emerson has well said of him, "whoever writes for the love of truth and beauty, and not with ulterior ends, belongs to a sacred class, among whom there are few men of the present age who have a better claim to be numbered than Mr. Landor." The two essays given here are thoroughly characteristic of Landor's polished style.

PETITION OF THE THUGS FOR TOLERATION

WE, the most religious fraternity of Thugs, having heard it reported throughout the whole extent of India, that toleration is granted by the wisdom of the British Parliament to every diversity of creed, do most humbly submit our grievances to the patient consideration of your Honorable House. We claim a much higher antiquity than the earliest of devotional institutions known in Britain. We are the first-born of Cain. We profit by the holy book he left behind him, covering with fig-leaf what we consider to be unessential or liable to misinterpretation. Our humanity teaches us to confine no dissidents in unhealthy prisons, or to separate no husband from his wife, no father from his children, but merely to offer up man's life-blood to Him who gave man life. Our forefather, Cain, did not cast his brother Abel into a dark cavern infested by bats and serpents, but slew him as manfully, and dexterously, and instantaneously, as could have been done by the best swordsman in the service of Hyder Ali.

It is reported to us that there are religions by which it is declared lawful and right to disobey the prince they have sworn to obey, and even to select out of the rabble a leader of singing boys in flowing stoles, sable and white, purple and scarlet; and to place him in opposition to the rightful ruler of the land.

Fables are told in all countries, and this statement hath much the appearance of one. But if there is any truth in it, we would contrast it with the unquestionable history of our exploits and demeanor. Millions, in the vast country round about us, hold it a religious duty for wives to perish by fire at the side of their defunct husbands. We ask no such favor, nor do our wives. Moreover, it is reported that in some island or peninsula on our Western coast, not, as here, the willing

and wary, but they whose tender age exposes them to be warped at every breath, are sacrificed yearly, thousand after thousand. Inadvertently and involuntarily do they suffer. The unmarried, the adolescent, are debarred from the duties of marriage, the delights of adolescence. The boys are placed under a knife which would be more innocent were it murderous, that their voices may be acceptable to the chief-priest in his orgies. The girls, if their mothers are unable to sell them advantageously, are delivered up to the discretion of the inferior priesthood, and diligently taught by their spiritual guides, as they call themselves, to answer all psychological queries, and to undergo the most abstruse physiological examinations. We dispute not the propriety or the sanctity of this discipline, leaving it entirely to the arbitration of your Honorable House. We entreat the much smaller favor of liberty to take away life when life hath had its enjoyments, which we have always done gently, considerately, without pain, and without passion. Never do we violate, under the cloak of religion, the prime ordinance of nature, the first command given by the Almighty to the father of our progenitor, Cain.

We lay our cause with confidence at the bar of your Honorable House, claiming and deserving no more than has already been granted by it to the three or four last religions which have consecutively been dominant in Great Britain. We hear that these religions are rolling over one another at this instant, and exercising a prodigious volubility of limb and tongue; the elderly and decrepit thrown on its back, cursing and swearing, but holding down the younger by the throat. We take no delight, no interest, in these prolusions; and we demand only simple protection, in meet reward for undivided allegiance.

No prayers do we offer up to God that it may please his Divine Majesty to assist us in sweeping our enemies from his earth; no thanksgivings for having bestrewn it with limbs and carcasses to satiate the hyena and the vulture. We invite our fellow-men to die as becomes them in his service. We lead Death by the hand in quiet and silence to his own door, and we depart in peace. Therefore we, conscious of our innocence and purity, venture to remind our generous protectors that the few we sacrifice are sacrificed to our God alone, and neither

to gratify pride nor vengeance; that if we slay a few hundreds in the space of a year, our gracious protectors slay occasionally as many thousands between the rising and setting sun. We do not, indeed, with the same fervor and magnificence as our gracious protectors, sing hymns, beat drums, blow trumpets, and swing bells from lofty towers in jubilee; but we wash our hands, lay aside our daggers, bend our knees, and pray.

Confidently, then, do we approach our gracious protectors, and entreat the same favor, the same liberty of worship, as our fellow-subjects.

THE BENEFITS OF PARLIAMENT

CLEAR-SIGHTED and far-sighted men are discussing the benefits of parliaments, such as time and decay, restoration and reform, have rendered them; and the blush of anger surmounts the blush of shame on the brow of duped credulity. Honester men, whoever they were, purchased those seats which the more cunning from under the hedge-row and from under the counter, have crept into. This is the principal change we have hitherto seen effected: we shall presently see a greater, but not so soon a better; tempestuous times, and cruel throes, and carnage, too, probably, must intervene.

Surely such an air of insolence and indifference never was displayed before, at the exposure of broken promises, gross deceptions, connivance at torture, at murder, and somewhat more than connivance at the surreptitious concealment of damnatory evidence. Inertness ever looks like moderation; but violent changes are sometimes brought about by tranquil and temporizing men. Nothing is so liable to overturn a State laden with debt as loose materials thrown into the middle of the road under the fallacious plea of mending and repairing. History opens her pages in vain to people who, without instruction, without reflection, without inquiry, call themselves practical. Never to have looked at a demonstration or a theory is their only claim to the title they assume. And what, forsooth, is the practice of these practicals? To take another course from that which their predecessors had taken; to undo what little good they may have done; and to exhaust the people's strength in opening new roads without an object and without a resting-place. This in generalities is metaphor, but in particulars it is truth. Ireland hath exhibited such a wasteful and unprofitable expenditure as utterly demoralized the lower orders, and rendered them

almost as contemptible as the higher. It caused improvidence in the one, peculation in the other, together with impudence, exaction, and ingratitude. The better part, which lay between, secreted their savings, left their country, and purchased freeholds in the United States. This fermenting leaven will there find room for expansion, and will work itself off innoxiously. The priest who would preach disaffection would be puzzled to discover an object for it in the woods and prairies. Quarrels and bloodshed there will be for a time, wherever that race exists, but they will be only internecive. Firmly do I believe, that the calamities which have befallen Ireland were necessary for her welfare, and that never in thousands of years has the hand of Providence been more manifest. By the stupidity and blindness and deafness of rulers, this salutary infliction was providently prolonged; on the other hand, by the formation of a police, the work of a great statesman now departed, that country has been preserved from as sanguinary a desolation as ravaged France at the close of the last century. Want, in one form or other, the *malesuada Fames,* and *turpis Egestas,* lies at the bottom of that vast vacuity, where burn inextinguishably the central fires, which shake at uncalculated periods all the regions of the earth. Something may be done towards the prognostication. To swell the affluent with fresh profusion is sure to wear down the patience of those who are driven to the wall. Sympathy, at first weak, inoperative, and silent, stirs by degrees and ultimately speaks out. Resistance comes against it from the high and powerful; suppression is aimed at; force recoils, and recoils in splinters; society has then no steadfast basis: the foundations heave; the superstructure rocks. Look round, and see who are the men who make democrats. They stand close above you. Democracy is the blubbery spawn begotten by the drunkenness of aristocracy. Exposed, bare, thriftless, hardy, envy, hatred, and malice are never apart from the ear of the disowned, until the child kills the parent or the parent kills the child. Whoever inherits lands, and the reminiscences growing out of them, deprecates the sad alternative.

"Give us peace in our time, O Lord!" is truly a pious and a righteous prayer. "Give us peace in all times," is one more pious and more righteous. Can we expect it, can we dare to

hope it, if we squander on idle and luxurious princes the money extorted from toil and penury to purchase the light of day? Parliament must be commanded by its constituents to revoke all inordinate grants, ancient and recent. Charles II had no right to confer on his bastards the patrimony of the people. Patent-offices must be declared abuses; not only are they contrary to equity, but also to the usages of those forefathers to whose weakness we cling, but whose strength and manliness we seem to have forgotten. Let cause be shown why on the nephew or grandson of a king there be voted a dotation; let his services in war or peace be shown to us; let us measure his capacity, let us sound his depth, let us be made familiar with his merits. Sternly will it be asked before long why the Parliament of 1850 has anticipated future years, and decided for future Parliaments, which alone can be competent arbiters of its necessity. Has it suspicions and doubts whether another house of representatives would be accompanied with other instructions? What one parliament hath sanctioned, another may annul. If the people may give directions for revoking any old statute, it surely may give directions for revoking a grant of its money while the money is yet unpaid. To what extent of royal consanguinity must we carry our heavy taxation? By degrees there may be as many claimants as claim the green turban for descent from the prophet. I never heard that the head of the family, reigning at Constantinople, allowed them more than this distinction; or demanded from his people, when he could demand all they possess, the value of one zechin for his relatives. Little did he ever think of surrounding them with muftis and horse-tails, with the pageantry of religion and the pomp of war.

If we are to bow down and worship whatever images it may please the high menials of the palace to set up before us, be it permitted to remark that no images are rendered more venerable by a profusion of jewelry, a redundance of drapery, a flutter of embroidery, or gilding from head to foot. If we are to distinguish the features, if we are to admire the workmanship, it is of no advantage that they may be poised on columns a hundred feet above us. The barbarian may adore his own carving, a thing viler than himself; but civilized man requires the voice, the activity, the attention, the sympathy, of those to whom he assigns a station and is willing to respect.

ON GOING A JOURNEY

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THE SICK-CHAMBER

—

OF PERSONS ONE WOULD WISH TO HAVE SEEN

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BY

WILLIAM HAZLITT

WILLIAM HAZLITT

1778—1830

William Hazlitt was noted for his bold and vigorous tone of thinking, and for his acute criticism on poetry, the drama, and fine arts. He was a man of decided talent, but prone to paradox, and swayed by prejudice. He was well read in the old English authors, and had in general a just and delicate perception of their beauties. His style was strongly tinged by the peculiarities of his taste and reading; it was often sparkling, pungent, and picturesque in expression. Hazlitt was a native of Shropshire, the son of a Unitarian minister. He began life as a painter, but failed in attaining excellence in the profession, though he retained through life the most vivid and intense appreciation of its charms. His principal support was derived from the literary and political journals, to which he contributed essays, reviews, and criticisms. He wrote a metaphysical treatise "On the Principles of Human Action," 1805; an abridgment of Tucker's "Light of Nature," 1807; "Eloquence of the British Senate," 1808. In 1813 Hazlitt delivered a series of lectures on English philosophy at the Russell Institution.

In 1817 appeared his "View of the English Stage" and a collection of essays entitled "The Round Table." In 1818 he lectured at the Surrey Institution on the English poets. "The English Comic Writers," "The Dramatic Literature of the Time of Elizabeth," and the "Characters of Shakespeare's Plays" were then successively produced, being chiefly composed of theatrical criticisms contributed to the journals of the day. He wrote also "Table Talk," 1821-22; "The Spirit of the Age" (criticisms on contemporaries), 1825; "The Plain Speaker," a collection of essays, 1836. Various sketches of the galleries of art in England appeared from his pen, and "Notes of a Journey through France and Italy," originally contributed to one of the daily papers. He wrote the article "Fine Arts," for the "Encyclopædia Britannica," and essays on the English novelists and other standard authors, first published in the "Edinburgh Review." In the "London Magazine," the "New Monthly Magazine," and other periodicals, the hand of Hazlitt may be traced. His most elaborate work was a "Life of Napoleon," in four volumes (1828-30), which evinces all the peculiarities of his mind and opinions, but is very ably written. Shortly before his death—which took place in London on September 18, 1830—he had committed to the press the "Conversations of James Northcote, Esq.," containing remarks on arts and artists. The toils, uncertainties, and disappointments of a literary life, and the contests of bitter political warfare, soured and warped the mind of Hazlitt, and distorted his opinions of men and things; but those who trace the passionate flights of his imagination, his aspirations after ideal excellence and beauty, the brilliancy of his language while dwelling on some old poem, or picture, or dream of early days, and the undisguised freedom with which he pours out his whole soul to the reader, will readily assign to him both strength and versatility of genius. He had felt more than he had reflected or studied; and though proud of his acquirements as a metaphysician, he certainly could paint emotions better than he could unfold principles. The three essays given here are typical examples of his admirable style.

ON GOING A JOURNEY

ONE of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

> "The fields his study, nature was his book."

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticising hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room, and fewer encumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude; nor do I ask for

> "a friend in my retreat,
> Whom I may whisper, solitude is sweet."

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty—to think, feel, do, just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind; much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

> "May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,
> That in the various bustle of resort
> Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd,"

that I absent myself from the town for a while, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury, to exchange good things with and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road

before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sunburnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like "sunken wrack and sumless treasuries," burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull commonplaces, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. "Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!" I have just now other business in hand which would seem idle to you, but is with me "very stuff o' the conscience." Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. "Out upon such half-faced fellowship," say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's, that "he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time." So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. "Let me have a companion of my way," says Sterne, "were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines." It is beautifully said; but, in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of

dumb show, it is insipid; if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for this synthetical method on a journey in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomize them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briars and thorns of controversy. For once, I like to have it all my own way; and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no objection to argue a point with anyone for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a bean-field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is short-sighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the color of a cloud which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is, then, no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill-humor. Now, I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you—these may recall a number of objects, and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company seems extravagance or affectation; and, on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered), is a task to which few are competent. We must "give it an understanding, but no tongue." My old friend, Coleridge, however, could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale a summer's day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. "He talked far above singing." If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might perhaps wish to have someone with me to admire the swelling theme; or I could be

more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden. They had "that fine madness in them which our first poets had"; and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following:—

"Here be woods as green
As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet
As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet
Face of the curled stream, with flow'rs as many
As the young spring gives, and as choice as any;
Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells;
Arbors o'ergrown with woodbines, caves and dells.
Choose where thou wilt, whilst I sit by and sing,
Or gather rushes, to make many a ring
For thy long fingers; tell thee tales of love;
How the pale Phœbe, hunting in a grove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies;
How she conveyed him softly in a sleep,
His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
Head of old Latmos, where she stoops each night,
Gilding the mountain with her brother's light,
To kiss her sweetest."

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds; but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up its leaves, like flowers at sunset. I can make nothing out on the spot—I must have time to collect myself.

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects: it should be reserved for table-talk. Lamb is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out of doors, because he is the best within. I grant there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey; and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavor of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at the approach of nightfall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom, and then, after inquiring for the best entertainment that the

place affords, to "take one's ease at one's inn"! These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid, heartfelt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop: they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea,

"The cups that cheer, but not inebriate,"

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper—eggs and a rasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent veal cutlet! Sancho in such a situation once fixed on cow-heel; and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then, in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen. *Procul, O procul este profani!* ("Avaunt! avaunt! ye unhallowed.") These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the course of smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend. A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place; he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn. If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathize with him, and he breaks no squares. I associate nothing with my travelling companion but present objects and passing events. In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forget myself. But a friend reminds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in graciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits; or from having someone with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world; but your "unhoused free condition is put into circumspection and confine." The *incognito* of an inn is one of its striking privileges—"lord of one's self, uncumbered with a name." Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion—to lose our im-

portunate, tormenting, everlasting personal identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties—to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweetbreads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening—and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than "the gentleman in the parlor"! One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed commonplaces that we appear in the world; an inn restores us to the level of nature, and quits scores with society! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns—sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself, and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as once at Witham Common, where I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas—at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St. Neot's (I think it was), where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons, into which I entered at once, and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had ferried me over the Severn, standing up in a boat between me and the twilight—at other times I might mention luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember sitting up half the night to read "Paul and Virginia," which I picked up at an inn at Bridgewater, after being drenched in the rain all day; and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame D'Arblay's "Camilla." It was on the tenth of April, 1798, that I sat down to a volume of the "New Eloise," at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St. Preux describes his feelings as he first caught a glimpse, from the heights of the Jura, of the Pays de Vaud, which I had brought with me as a *bon bouche* to crown the evening with. It was my birthday, and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighborhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Llangollen turns off between Chirk and Wrexham, and on

passing a certain point, you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheatre, broad, barren hills rising in majestic state on either side, with "green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks" below, and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in the midst of them. The valley at this time "glittered green with sunny showers," and a budding ash-tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud, how glad I was to walk along the highroad that overlooks the delicious prospect, repeating the lines which I have just quoted[1] from Mr. Coleridge's poem! But besides the prospect which opened beneath my feet, another also opened to my inward sight, a heavenly vision, on which were written, in letters large as Hope could make them, these four words: Liberty, Genius, Love, Virtue; which have since faded into the light of common day, or mock my idle gaze.

"The beautiful is vanished, and returns not."

Still I would return some time or other to this enchanted spot; but I would return to it alone. What other self could I find to share that influx of thoughts, of regret, and delight, the fragments of which I could hardly conjure up to myself, so much have they been broken and defaced? I could stand on some tall rock, and overlook the precipice of years that separates me from what I then was. I was at that time going shortly to visit the poet whom I have above named. Where is he now? Not only I myself have changed; the world, which was then new to me, has become old and incorrigible. Yet will I turn to thee in thought, O sylvan Dee, in joy, in youth and gladness as thou then wert; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely!

There is hardly anything that shows the shortsightedness or capriciousness of the imagination more than travelling does. With change of place we change our ideas; nay, our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long-forgotten scenes, and then the picture of the mind revives again; but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think but of one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We

[1] "Ode to the Departing Year," stanza vii.

cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it, and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on, and think no more of it; the horizon that shuts it from our sight also blots it from our memory like a dream. In travelling through a wild, barren country, I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter,[2] "all is a desert." All that part of the map that we do not see before us is blank. The world in our conceit of it is not much bigger than a nutshell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, land to seas, making an image voluminous and vast;—the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population, known by the name of China, to us? An inch of pasteboard on a wooden globe, of no more account than a china orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piecemeal. In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections, we cannot, as it were, unfold the whole web of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived, and with which we have intimate associations, everyone must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression: we remember circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names that we had not thought of for years; but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten! To return to the question I have quitted above.

I have no objections to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures,

[2] In Sir George Etherege's "Man of Mode."

in company with a friend or party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to: in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place;" nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honors indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean *éclat*—showed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,

"With glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd"—

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges—was at home in the Bodleian; and at Blenheim quite superseded the powdered cicerone that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures. As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen; there must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech; and I own that the pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species of one's self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support. Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the Mariners' Hymn,

which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbor, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones: I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons and the French people! There is undoubtedly a sensation in travelling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else; but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference, and, like a dream or another state or existence, does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but a momentary hallucination. It demands an effort to exchange our actual for our ideal identity; and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very keenly, we must "jump" all our present comforts and connections. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful, and, in one sense, instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright existence, and never to join kindly onto it. We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings,

"Out of my country and myself I go."

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts, do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and objects that recall them; but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in travelling abroad, if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterwards at home!

THE SICK-CHAMBER

FROM the crowded theatre to the sick-chamber, from the noise, the glare, the keen delight, to the loneliness, the darkness, the dulness, and the pain, there is but one step. A breath of air, an overhanging cloud, effects it; and though the transition is made in an instant, it seems as if it would last forever. A sudden illness not only puts a stop to the career of our triumphs and agreeable sensations, but blots out all recollection of and desire for them. We lose the relish of enjoyment; we are effectually cured of our romance. Our bodies are confined to our beds; nor can our thoughts wantonly detach themselves and take the road to pleasure, but turn back with doubt and loathing at the faint evanescent phantom which has usurped its place. If the folding-doors of the imagination were thrown open or left ajar, so that from the disordered couch where we lay, we could still hail the vista of the past or future, and see the gay and gorgeous visions floating at a distance, however denied to our embrace, the contrast, though mortifying, might have something soothing in it, the mock-splendor might be the greater for the actual gloom; but the misery is that we cannot conceive anything beyond or better than the present evil: we are shut up and spellbound in that, the curtains of the mind are drawn close, we cannot escape from "the body of this death," our souls are conquered, dismayed, "cooped and cabined in," and thrown with the lumber of our corporeal frames in one corner of a neglected and solitary room. We hate ourselves and everything else; nor does one ray of comfort "peep through the blanket of the dark" to give us hope. How should we entertain the image of grace and beauty when our bodies writhe with pain? To what purpose invoke the echo of some rich strain of music, when we ourselves can scarcely breathe? The very attempt is an impossibility. We give up the vain task of linking delight to agony, of urging tor-

por into ecstasy, which makes the very heart sick. We feel the present pain, and an impatient longing to get rid of it. This were indeed " a consummation devoutly to be wished "; on this we are intent, in earnest, inexorable, all else is impertinence and folly; and could we but obtain Ease (that goddess of the infirm and suffering) at any price, we think we could forswear all other joys and all other sorrows. *Hoc erat in votis.* All other things but our disorder and its cure seem less than nothing and vanity. It assumes a palpable form; it becomes a demon, a spectre, an incubus hovering over and oppressing us: we grapple with it; it strikes its fangs into us, spreads its arms around us, infects us with its breath, glares upon us with its hideous aspect; we feel it take possession of every fibre and of every faculty; and we are at length so absorbed and fascinated by it, that we cannot divert our reflections from it an instant, for all other things but pain (and that which we suffer most acutely) appear to have lost their pith and power to interest. They are turned to dust and stubble. This is the reason of the fine resolutions we sometimes form in such cases, and of the vast superiority of the sick-bed to the pomps and thrones of the world. We easily renounce wine when we have nothing but the taste of physic in our mouths; the rich banquet tempts us not, when " our very gorge rises " within us. Love and Beauty fly from a bed twisted into a thousand folds by restless lassitude and tormenting cares, the nerve of pleasure is killed by the pains that shoot through the head or rack the limbs; and indigestion seizes you with its leaden grasp and giant force (down, Ambition!)—you shiver and tremble like a leaf in a fit of the ague. (Avarice, let go your palsied hold!) We then are in mood, without ghostly advice, to betake ourselves to the life of the " hermit poor,"

" In pensive place obscure,"

and should be glad to prevent the return of a fever raging in the blood by feeding on pulse, and slaking our thirst at the limpid brook. The sudden resolutions, however, or " vows made in pain as violent and void," are generally of short duration: the excess and the sorrow for it are alike selfish; and those repentances which are the most loud and passionate are the surest to end speedily in a relapse; for both originate in the same cause, the being engrossed by the prevailing feel-

ing (whatever it may be), and an utter incapacity to look beyond it.

> "The Devil was sick, the Devil a monk would be:
> The Devil grew well, the devil a monk was he!" [1]

It is amazing how little effect physical suffering or local circumstances have upon the mind, except while we are subject to their immediate influence. While the impression lasts they are everything, when it is gone they are nothing. We toss and tumble about in a sick-bed; we lie on our right side, we then change to the left; we stretch ourselves on our backs, we turn on our faces; we wrap ourselves under the clothes to exclude the cold, we throw them off to escape the heat and suffocation; we grasp the pillow in agony, we fling ourselves out of bed, we walk up and down the room with hasty or feeble steps; we return to bed; we are worn out with fatigue and pain, yet can get no repose for the one nor intermission for the other; we summon all our patience, or give vent to passion and petty rage; nothing avails; we seem wedded to our disease, "like life and death in disproportion met"; we make new efforts, try new expedients, but nothing appears to shake it off, or promise relief from our grim foe: it infixes its sharp sting into us, or overpowers us by its sickly and stunning weight; every moment is as much as we can bear, and yet there seems no end of our lengthening tortures; we are ready to faint with exhaustion or work ourselves up to a frenzy: we "trouble deaf Heaven with our bootless prayers"; we think our last hour has come, or peevishly wish it were, to put an end to the scene; we ask questions as to the origin of evil, and the necessity of pain; we "moralize our complaints into a thousand similes"; we deny the use of medicine *in toto*, we have a full persuasion that all doctors are mad or knaves, that our object is to gain relief, and theirs (out of the perversity of human nature, or to seem wiser than we) to prevent it; we catechize the apothecary, rail at the nurse, and cannot so much as conceive the possibility that this state of things should not last forever; we are even angry at those who would give us encouragement as if they would make dupes or children of us; we might seek a release by poison, a halter, or the sword, but we have not strength of mind enough

[1] Rabelais, bk iv. cap. 24.

—our nerves are too shaken to attempt even this poor revenge—when lo! a change comes, the spell falls off, and the next moment we forget all that has happened to us. No sooner does our disorder turn its back upon us than we laugh at it. The state we have been in sounds like a dream—a fable; health is the order of the day, strength is ours *de jure* and *de facto;* and we discard all uncalled-for evidence of the contrary with a smile of contemptuous incredulity, just as we throw our physic-bottles out of the window. I see (as I awake from a short uneasy doze) a golden light shine through the white window curtains on the opposite wall—is it the dawn of a new day or the departing light of evening? I do not well know, for the opium " they have drugged my posset with " has made strong havoc with my brain, and I am uncertain whether time has stood still, or advanced, or gone backward. By " puzzling o'er the doubt " my attention is drawn a little out of myself to external objects; and I consider whether it would not administer some relief to my monotonous languor if I call up a vivid picture of an evening sky I witnessed a short time before—the white, fleecy clouds, the azure vault, the verdant fields, and balmy air! In vain! The wings of fancy refuse to mount from my bedside. The air without has nothing in common with the closeness within; the clouds disappear, the sky is instantly overcast and black. I walk out in this scene soon after I recover; and with those favorite and well-known objects interposed, can no longer recall the tumbled pillow, the juleps, or the labels, or the wholesome dungeon in which I was before immured. What is contrary to our present sensations or settled habits amalgamates indifferently with our belief; the imagination rules over the imaginary themes; the senses and customs have a narrow sway, and admit but one guest at a time. It is hardly to be wondered at that we dread physical calamities so little beforehand; we think no more of them after they have happened. Out of sight, out of mind. This will perhaps explain why all actual punishment has so little effect; it is a state contrary to nature, alien to the will. If it does not touch honor and conscience (and where these are not, how can it touch them?) it goes for nothing; and where these are, it rather sears and hardens them. The gyves, the cell, the meagre fare, the hard labor, are abhorrent to the mind of the culprit on whom they are imposed, who carries the

love of liberty or indulgence to licentiousness, and who throws the thought of them behind him (the moment he can evade the penalty) with scorn and laughter,

" Like Samson his green wythes."

So, in travelling, we often meet with great fatigue and inconvenience from heat or cold, or other accident, and resolve never to go a journey again; but we are ready to set off on a new excursion to-morrow. We remember the landscape, the change of scene, the romantic expectation, and think no more of the heat, the noise, and the dust. The body forgets its grievances till they recur; but imagination, passion, pride, have a longer memory and quicker apprehensions. To the first, the pleasure or pain is nothing when once over; to the last, it is only then that they begin to exist. The line in " Metastasio,"

" The worst of every evil is the fear,"

is true only when applied to the latter sort. It is curious that, on coming out of a sick-room, where one has been pent up some time, and grown weak and nervous, and looking at nature for the first time, the objects that present themselves have a very questionable and spectral appearance; the people in the street resemble flies crawling about, and seem scarce half alive. It is we who are just risen from a torpid and unwholesome state, and who impart our imperfect feelings of existence, health, and motion to others. Or it may be that the violence and exertion of the pain we have gone through make common every-day objects seem unreal and unsubstantial. It is not till we have established ourselves in form in the sitting-room, wheeled round the arm-chair to the fire (for this makes part of our reintroduction to the ordinary modes of being in all seasons), felt our appetite return, and taken up a book, that we can be considered as at all returned to ourselves. And even then our sensations are rather empirical than positive, as after sleep we stretch out our hands to know whether we are awake. This is the time for reading. Books are then indeed " a world both pure and good," into which we enter with all our hearts, after our revival from illness and respite from the tomb, as with the freshness and novelty of youth. They are not merely acceptable as without too much exertion they pass the time and relieve *ennui*, but

from a certain suspension and deadening of the passions, and abstraction of worldly pursuits, they may be said to bring back and be friendly to the guileless and enthusiastic tone of feeling with which we formerly read them. Sickness has weaned us *pro tempore* from contest and cabal; and we are fain to be docile and children again. All strong changes in our present pursuits throw us back upon the past. This is the shortest and most complete emancipation from our late discomfiture. We wonder that anyone who has read the "History of a Foundling" [2] should labor under an indigestion, nor do we comprehend how a perusal of the "Fairie Queen" should not insure the true believer an uninterrupted succession of halcyon days. Present objects bear a retrospective meaning, and point to "a foregone conclusion." Returning back to life with half-strung nerves and shattered strength, we seem as when we first entered it with uncertain purposes and faltering aims. The machine has received a shock, and it moves on more tremulously than before, and not all at once, in the beaten track. Startled at the approach of death, we are willing to get as far from it as we can by making a proxy of our former selves; and finding the precarious tenure by which we hold existence, and its last sands running out, we gather up and make the most of the fragments that memory has stored up for us. Everything is seen through a medium of reflection and contrast. We hear the sound of merry voices in the street, and this carries us back to the recollections of some country town or village group—

> "We see the children sporting on the shore,
> And hear the mighty waters roaring evermore."

A cricket chirps on the hearth, and we are reminded of Christmas gambols long age. The very cries in the street seem to be of a former date, and the dry toast eats very much as it did—twenty years ago. A rose smells doubly sweet after being stifled with tinctures and essences, and we enjoy the idea of a journey and an inn the more for having been bed-rid. But a book is the secret and sure charm to bring all these implied associations to a focus. I should prefer an old one, Mr. Lamb's favorite, the "Journey to Lisbon," [3] or the "Decameron," if I could get it; but, if a new one, let it be "Paul Clifford." That

[2] Fielding's "Tom Jones." [3] Fielding's "Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon."

book has the singular advantage of being written by a gentleman, and not about his own class. The characters he commemorates are every moment at fault between life and death, hunger and forced loan on the public; and therefore the interest they take in themselves, and which we take in them, has no cant or affectation in it, but is "lively, audible, and full of vent." A set of well-dressed gentlemen, picking their teeth with a graceful air after dinner, and endeavoring to keep their cravats from the slightest discomposure, and saying the most insipid things in the most insipid manner, do not make a scene. Well, then, I have got the new paraphrase on the "Beggar's Opera," am fairly embarked in it; and at the end of the first volume, where I am galloping across the heath with the three highwaymen, while the moon is shining full upon them, feel my nerves so braced, and my spirits so exhilarated, that, to say truth, I am scarce sorry for the occasion that has thrown me upon the work and the author—have quite forgot my "sick-room," and more than ready to recant the doctrine that "Free Admission" [4] to the theatre is

> "The true pathos and sublime
> Of human life,"

for I feel as I read that if the stage shows us the masks of men and the pageant of the world, books let us into their souls and lay open to us the secrets of our own. They are the first and last, the most home-felt, the most heart-felt of all our enjoyments!

[4] The subject of a paper by Hazlitt in "The New Monthly" in the same year as this essay.

OF PERSONS ONE WOULD WISH TO HAVE SEEN

" Come like shadows—so depart."

LAMB it was, I think, who suggested this subject, as well as the defence of Guy Fawkes, which I urged him to execute. As, however, he would undertake neither, I suppose I must do both, a task for which he would have been much fitter, no less from the temerity than the felicity of his pen—

" Never so sure our rapture to create
As when it touch'd the brink of all we hate."

Compared with him, I shall, I fear, make but a commonplace piece of business of it; but I should be loth the idea was entirely lost, and, besides, I may avail myself of some hints of his in the progress of it. I am sometimes, I suspect, a better reporter of the ideas of other people than expounder of my own. I pursue the one too far into paradox or mysticism; the others I am not bound to follow farther than I like, or than seems fair and reasonable.

On the question being started, Ayrton said, " I suppose the two first persons you would choose to see would be the two greatest namest in English literature, Sir Isaac Newton and Mr. Locke? " In this Ayrton, as usual, reckoned without his host. Everyone burst out a-laughing at the expression on Lamb's face, in which impatience was restrained by courtesy. " Yes, the greatest names," he stammered out hastily; " but they were not persons—not persons." " Not persons," said Ayrton, looking wise and foolish at the same time, afraid his triumph might be premature. "That is," rejoined Lamb, " not characters, you know. By Mr. Locke and Sir Isaac Newton, you mean the ' Essay on the Human Understanding,' and the ' Principia,' which we have to this day. Beyond their con-

tents there is nothing personally interesting in the men. But what we want to see anyone bodily for, is when there is something peculiar, striking in the individuals, more than we can learn from their writings, and yet are curious to know. I dare say Locke and Newton were very like Kneller's portraits of them. But who could paint Shakespeare?" "Ay," retorted Ayrton, "there it is; then I suppose you would prefer seeing him and Milton instead?" "No," said Lamb, "neither. I have seen so much of Shakespeare on the stage and on bookstalls, in frontispieces and on mantelpieces, that I am quite tired of the everlasting repetition: and as to Milton's race, the impressions that have come down to us of it I do not like; it is too starched and puritanical; and I should be afraid of losing some of the manna of his poetry in the leaven of his countenance and the precisian's band and gown." "I shall guess no more," said Ayrton. "Who is it, then, you would like to see 'in his habit as he lived,' if you had your choice of the whole range of English literature?" Lamb then named Sir Thomas Browne and Fulke Greville, the friend of Sir Philip Sidney, as the two worthies whom he should feel the greatest pleasure to encounter on the floor of his apartment in their nightgown and slippers and to exchange friendly greeting with them. At this Ayrton laughed outright, and conceived Lamb was jesting with him; but as no one followed his example, he thought there might be something in it, and waited for an explanation in a state of whimsical suspense. Lamb then (as well as I can remember a conversation that passed twenty years ago—how time slips!) went on as follows: "The reason why I pitch upon these two authors is, that their writings are riddles, and they themselves the most mysterious of personages. They resemble the soothsayers of old, who dealt in dark hints and doubtful oracles; and I should like to ask them the meaning of what no mortal but themselves, I should suppose, can fathom. There is Dr. Johnson: I have no curiosity, no strange uncertainty about him; he and Boswell together have pretty well let me into the secret of what passed through his mind. He and other writers like him are sufficiently explicit; my friends, whose repose I should be tempted to disturb (were it in my power), are implicit, inextricable, inscrutable.

"When I look at that obscure but gorgeous prose composition, the 'Urn-burial,' I seem to myself to look into a deep abyss, at the bottom of which are hid pearls and rich treasure; or it is like a stately labyrinth of doubt and withering speculation, and I would invoke the spirit of the author to lead me through it. Besides, who would not be curious to see the lineaments of a man who, having himself been twice married, wished that mankind were propagated like trees! As to Fulke Greville, he is like nothing but one of his own 'Prologues spoken by the ghost of an old king of Ormus,' a truly formidable and inviting personage: his style is apocalyptical, cabalistical, a knot worthy of such an apparition to untie; and for the unravelling a passage or two, I would stand the brunt of an encounter with so portentous a commentator!" "I am afraid, in that case," said Ayrton, "that if the mystery were once cleared up, the merit might be lost;" and turning to me, whispered a friendly apprehension, that while Lamb continued to admire these old crabbed authors, he would never become a popular writer. Dr. Donne was mentioned as a writer of the same period, with a very interesting countenance, whose history was singular, and whose meaning was often quite as "uncomeatable," without a personal citation from the dead, as that of any of his contemporaries. The volume was produced; and while someone was expatiating on the exquisite simplicity and beauty of the portrait prefixed to the old edition, Ayrton got hold of the poetry, and exclaiming "What have we here?" read the following:

> "'Here lies a She-Sun and a He-Moon there—
> She gives the best light to his sphear
> Or each is both, and all, and so
> They unto one another nothing owe.'" [1]

There was no resisting this, till Lamb, seizing the volume, turned to the beautiful "Lines to His Mistress," dissuading her from accompanying him abroad, and read them with suffused features and a faltering tongue:

> "'By our first strange and fatal interview,
> By all desires which thereof did ensue,
> By our long starving hopes, by that remorse
> Which my words' masculine perswasive force

[1] "Epithalamion on Frederick, Count Palatina of the Rhyne, and the Lady Elizabeth."

Begot in thee, and by the memory
Of hurts, which spies and rivals threatned me,
I calmely beg. But by thy father's wrath,
By all paines which want and divorcement hath,
I conjure thee; and all the oathes which I
And thou have sworne to seale joynt constancy
Here I unsweare, and overswear them thus—
Thou shalt not love by wayes so dangerous.
Temper, O fair love! love's impetuous rage,
Be my true mistris still, not my faign'd Page;
I'll goe, and, by thy kinde leave, leave behinde
Thee! onely worthy to nurse it in my minde.
Thirst to come backe; O, if thou die before,
My soule, from other lands to thee shall soare.
Thy (else almighty) beautie cannot move
Rage from the seas, nor thy love teach them love,
Nor tame wild Boreas' harshnesse: thou hast reade
How roughly hee in peeces shivered
Fair Orithea, whom he swore he lov'd.
Fall ill or good, 'tis madnesse to have prov'd
Dangers unurg'd: Feed on this flattery,
That absent lovers one in th' other be.
Dissemble nothing, not a boy; nor change
Thy bodie's habite, not minde; be not strange
To thyeselfe onely. All will spie in thy face
A blushing, womanly, discovering grace.
Richly-cloath'd apes are call'd apes, and as soon
Eclips'd as bright, we call the moone the moon.
Men of France, changeable camelions,
Spittles of diseases, shops of fashions,
Love's fuellers, and the rightest company
Of players, which upon the world's stage be,
Will quickly know thee . . .
O stay here! for for thee
England is onely a worthy gallerie,
To walke in expectation; till from thence
Our greatest King call thee to his presence.
When I am gone, dreame me some happinesse,
Nor let thy lookes our long-hid love confesse,
Nor praise, nor dispraise me; nor blesse, nor curse
Openly love's force, nor in bed fright thy nurse
With midnight's startings, crying out, Oh, oh,
Nurse, oh, my love is slaine, I saw him goe
O'er the white Alpes alone; I saw him, I,
Assail'd, fight, taken, stabb'd, bleed, fall, and die.
Augure me better chance, except dread Jove
Thinke it enough for me to have had thy love.' "

Someone then inquired of Lamb if we could not see from the window the Temple-walk in which Chaucer used to take his exercise; and on his name being put to the vote, I was pleased to find that there was a general sensation in his favor in all but Ayrton, who said something about the ruggedness of the metre, and even objected to the quaintness of the orthography. I was vexed at this superficial gloss, pertinaciously reducing everything to its own trite level, and asked "if he did not think it would be worth while to scan the eye that had first greeted the Muse in that dim twilight and early dawn of English literature; to see the head round which the visions of fancy must have played like gleams of inspiration or a sudden glory; to watch those lips that 'lisped in numbers, for the numbers came'—as by a miracle, or as if the dumb should speak? Nor was it alone that he had been the first to tune his native tongue (however imperfectly to modern ears); but he was himself a noble, manly character, standing before his age and striving to advance it; a pleasant humorist withal, who has not only handed down to us the living manners of his time, but had, no doubt, store of curious and quaint devices, and would make as hearty a companion as mine host of the Tabard. His interview with Petrarch is fraught with interest. Yet I would rather have seen Chaucer in company with the author of the 'Decameron,' and have heard them exchange their best stories together—the 'Squire's Tale' against the story of the 'Falcon,' the 'Wife of Bath's Prologue' against the 'Adventures of Friar Albert.' How fine to see the high mysterious brow which learning then wore, relieved by the gay, familiar tone of men of the world, and by the courtesies of genius! Surely, the thoughts and feelings which passed through the minds of these great revivers of learning, these Cadmuses who sowed the teeth of letters, must have stamped an expression on their features as different from the moderns as their books, and well worth the perusal. Dante," I continued, "is as interesting a person as his own Ugolino, one whose lineaments curiosity would as eagerly devour in order to penetrate his spirit, and the only one of the Italian poets I should care much to see. There is a fine portrait of Ariosto by no less a hand than Titian's; light, Moorish, spirited, but not answering our idea. The same

artist's large colossal profile of Peter Aretine is the only likeness of the kind that has the effect of conversing with 'the mighty dead'; and this is truly spectral, ghastly, necromantic." Lamb put it to me if I should like to see Spenser as well as Chaucer; and I answered, without hesitation, "No; for that his beauties were ideal, visionary, not palpable or personal, and therefore connected with less curiosity about the man. His poetry was the essence of romance, a very halo round the bright orb of fancy; and the bringing in the individual might dissolve the charm. No tones of voice could come up to the mellifluous cadence of his verse; no form but of a winged angel could vie with the airy shapes he has described. He was (to my apprehension) rather a 'creature of the element, that lived in the rainbow and played in the plighted clouds,' than an ordinary mortal. Or if he did appear, I should wish it to be as a mere vision, like one of his own pageants, and that he should pass by unquestioned like a dream or sound—

> "'——*That* was Arion crown'd:
> So went he playing on the wat'ry plain.'"

Captain Burney muttered something about Columbus, and Martin Burney hinted at the Wandering Jew; but the last was set aside as spurious, and the first made over to the New World.

"I should like," said Mrs. Reynolds, "to have seen Pope talk with Patty Blount; and I have seen Goldsmith." Everyone turned round to look at Mrs. Reynolds, as if by so doing they could get a sight at Goldsmith.

"Where," asked a harsh, croaking voice, "was Dr. Johnson in the years 1745–46? He did not write anything that we know of, nor is there any account of him in Boswell during those two years. Was he in Scotland with the Pretender? He seems to have passed through the scenes in the Highlands in company with Boswell, many years after, 'with lack-lustre eye,' yet as if they were familiar to him, or associated in his mind with interests that he durst not explain. If so, it would be an additional reason for my liking him; and I would give something to have seen him seated in the tent with the youthful Majesty of Britain, and penning the Proclamation to all true subjects and adherents of the legitimate government."

"I thought," said Ayrton, turning short round upon Lamb, "that you of the Lake School did not like Pope?" "Not like Pope! My dear sir, you must be under a mistake—I can read him over and over forever!" "Why, certainly, the 'Essay on Man' must be allowed to be a masterpiece." "It may be so, but I seldom look into it." "Oh! then it's his satires you admire?" "No, not his satires, but his friendly epistles and his compliments." "Compliments! I did not know he ever made any." "The finest," said Lamb, "that were ever paid by the wit of man. Each of them is worth an estate for life—nay, is an immortality. There is that superb one to Lord Cornbury:

> "'Despise low joys, low gains;
> Disdain whatever Cornbury disdains;
> Be virtuous, and be happy for your pains.'

Was there ever more artful insinuation of idolatrous praise? And then that noble apotheosis of his friend Lord Mansfield (however little deserved), when, speaking of the House of Lords, he adds:

> "'Conspicuous scene! another yet is nigh,
> (More silent far) where kings and poets lie;
> Where Murray (long enough his country's pride)
> Shall be no more than Tully or than Hyde!'

And with what a fine turn of indignant flattery he addresses Lord Bolingbroke:

> "'Why rail they then, if but one wreath of mine,
> O all-accomplish'd St. John, deck thy shrine?'

Or turn," continued Lamb, with a slight hectic on his cheek and his eye glistening, "to his list of early friends:

> "'But why then publish? Granville the polite,
> And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write;
> Well-natured Garth inflamed with early praise,
> And Congreve loved, and Swift endured my lays:
> The courtly Talbot, Somers, Sheffield read,
> Ev'n mitred Rochester would nod the head;
> And St. John's self (great Dryden's friend before)
> Received with open arms one poet more.
> Happy my studies, if by these approved!
> Happier their author, if by these beloved!
> From these the world will judge of men and books,
> Not from the Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cooks.'"

Here his voice totally failed him, and throwing down the book, he said, "Do you think I would not wish to have been friends with such a man as this?"

"What say you to Dryden?" "He rather made a show of himself, and courted popularity in that lowest temple of fame, a coffee-shop, so as in some measure to vulgarize one's idea of him. Pope, on the contrary, reached the very beau ideal of what a poet's life should be; and his fame while living seemed to be an emanation from that which was to circle his name after death. He was so far enviable (and one would feel proud to have witnessed the rare spectacle in him) that he was almost the only poet and man of genius who met with his reward on this side of the tomb, who realized in friends, fortune, the esteem of the world, the most sanguine hopes of a youthful ambition, and who found that sort of patronage from the great during his lifetime which they would be thought anxious to bestow upon him after his death. Read Gay's verses to him on his supposed return from Greece, after his translation of Homer was finished, and say if you would not gladly join the bright procession that welcomed him home, or see it once more land at Whitehall stairs." "Still," said Mrs. Reynolds, "I would rather have seen him talking with Patty Blount, or riding by in a coronet-coach with Lady Mary Wortley Montague!"

Erasmus Phillips, who was deep in a game of piquet at the other end of the room, whispered to Martin Burney to ask if "Junius" would not be a fit person to invoke from the dead. "Yes," said Lamb, "provided he would agree to lay aside his mask."

We were now at a stand for a short time, when Fielding was mentioned as a candidate; only one, however, seconded the proposition. "Richardson?" "By all means, but only to look at him through the glass door of his back shop, hard at work upon one of his novels (the most extraordinary contrast that ever was presented between an author and his works); not to let him come behind his counter, lest he should want you to turn customer, or to go upstairs with him, lest he should offer to read the first manuscript of 'Sir Charles Grandison,' which was originally written in eight-and-twenty volumes octavo, or get out the letters of his female correspondents, to prove that Joseph Andrews was low."

There was but one statesman in the whole of English history that anyone expressed the least desire to see—Oliver Cromwell, with his fine, frank, rough, pimply face and wily policy; and one enthusiast, John Bunyan, the immortal author of the "Pilgrim's Progress." It seemed that if he came into the room, dreams would follow him, and that each person would nod under his golden cloud, "nigh-sphered in heaven," a canopy as strange and stately as any in Homer.

Of all persons near our own time, Garrick's name was received with the greatest enthusiasm, who was proposed by Baron Field. He presently superseded both Hogarth and Handel, who had been talked of, but then it was on condition that he should act in tragedy and comedy, in the play and the farce, Lear and Wildair and Abel Drugger. What a "sight for sore eyes" that would be! Who would not part with a year's income at least, almost with a year of his natural life, to be present at it? Besides, as he could not act alone, and recitations are unsatisfactory things, what a troop he must bring with him—the silver-tongued Barry, and Quin, and Shuter and Weston, and Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Pritchard, of whom I have heard my father speak as so great a favorite when he was young. This would indeed be a revival of the dead, the restoring of art; and so much the more desirable, as such is the lurking scepticism mingled with our overstrained admiration of past excellence, that though we have the speeches of Burke, the portraits of Reynolds, the writings of Goldsmith, and the conversation of Johnson, to show what people could do at that period, and to confirm the universal testimony to the merits of Garrick; yet, as it was before our time, we have our misgivings, as if he was probably, after all, little better than a Bartlemy-fair actor, dressed out to play Macbeth in a scarlet coat and laced cocked-hat. For one, I should like to have seen and heard with my own eyes and ears. Certainly, by all accounts, if anyone was ever moved by the true histrionic *æstus*, it was Garrick. When he followed the Ghost in "Hamlet," he did not drop the sword, as most actors do, behind the scenes, but kept the point raised the whole way round, so fully was he possessed with the idea, or so anxious not to lose sight of his part for a moment. Once at a splendid dinner-party at Lord ——'s, they suddenly missed

Garrick, and could not imagine what was become of him, till they were drawn to the window by the convulsive screams and peals of laughter of a young negro boy, who was rolling on the ground in an ecstasy of delight to see Garrick mimicking a turkey-cock in the courtyard, with his coat-tail stuck out behind, and in a seeming flutter of feathered rage and pride. Of our party only two persons present had seen the British Roscius; and they seemed as willing as the rest to renew their acquaintance with their old favorite.

We were interrupted in the hey-day and mid-career of this fanciful speculation, by a grumbler in a corner, who declared it was a shame to make all this rout about a mere player and farce-writer, to the neglect and exclusion of the fine old dramatists, the contemporaries and rivals of Shakespeare. Lamb said he had anticipated this objection when he had named the author of "Mustapha" and "Alaham"; and, out of caprice, insisted upon keeping him to represent the set, in preference to the wild, hare-brained enthusiast, Kit Marlowe; to the sexton of St. Ann's, Webster, with his melancholy yew-trees and death's-heads; to Decker, who was but a garrulous proser; to the voluminous Heywood; and even to Beaumont and Fletcher, whom we might offend by complimenting the wrong author on their joint productions. Lord Brooke, on the contrary, stood quite by himself, or, in Cowley's words, was "a vast species alone." Someone hinted at the circumstance of his being a lord, which rather startled Lamb, but he said a ghost would perhaps dispense with strict etiquette, on being regularly addressed by his title. Ben Jonson divided our suffrages pretty equally. Some were afraid he would begin to traduce Shakespeare, who was not present to defend himself. "If he grows disagreeable," it was whispered aloud, "there is Godwin can match him." At length, his romantic visit to Drummond of Hawthornden was mentioned, and turned the scale in his favor.

Lamb inquired if there was anyone that was hanged that I would choose to mention? And I answered, Eugene Aram. The name of the "Admirable Crichton" was suddenly started as a splendid example of waste talents, so different from the generality of his countrymen. This choice was mightily approved by a North-Briton present, who declared himself de-

scended from that prodigy of learning and accomplishment, and said he had family plate in his possession as vouchers for the fact, with the initials A. C.—"Admirable Crichton"! Hunt laughed, or rather roared, as heartily at this as I should think he has done for many years.

The last-named Mitre-courtier[2] then wished to know whether there were any metaphysicians to whom one might be tempted to apply the wizard spell? I replied, there were only six in modern times deserving the name—Hobbes, Berkeley, Butler, Hartley, Hume, Leibnitz; and perhaps Jonathan Edwards, a Massachusetts man.[3] As to the French, who talked fluently of having created this science, there was not a tittle in any of their writings that was not to be found literally in the authors I had mentioned. [Horne Tooke, who might have a claim to come in under the head of grammar, was still living.] None of these names seemed to excite much interest, and I did not plead for the reappearance of those who might be thought best fitted by the abstracted nature of their studies for the present spiritual and disembodied state, and who, even while on this living stage, were nearly divested of common flesh and blood. As Ayrton, with an uneasy, fidgety face, was about to put some question about Mr. Locke and Dugald Stewart, he was prevented by Martin Burney, who observed, "If J—— was here, he would undoubtedly be for having up those profound and redoubted socialists, Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus." I said this might be fair enough in him who had read, or fancied he had read, the original works, but I did not see how we could have any right to call up these authors to give an account of themselves in person till we had looked into their writings.

By this time it should seem that some rumor of our whimsical deliberation had got wind, and had disturbed the "irritable genus" in their shadowy abodes, for we received messages from several candidates that we had just been thinking

[2] Lamb at this time occupied chambers in Mitre Court, Temple.

[3] Bacon is not included in this list, nor do I know where he should come in. It is not easy to make room for him and his reputation together. This great and celebrated man in some of his works recommends it to pour a bottle of claret into the ground of a morning, and to stand over it, inhaling the perfumes. So he sometimes enriched the dry and barren soil of speculation with the fine aromatic spirit of his genius. His essays and his "Advancement of Learning" are works of vast depth and scope of observation. The last, though it contains no positive discoveries, is a noble chart of the human intellect, and a guide to all future inquirers.

of. Gray declined our invitation, though he had not yet been asked; Gay offered to come, and bring in his hand the Duchess of Bolton, the original Polly; Steele and Addison left their cards as Captain Sentry and Sir Roger de Coverley; Swift came in and sat down without speaking a word, and quitted the room as abruptly; Otway and Chatterton were seen lingering on the opposite side of the Styx, but could not muster enough between them to pay Charon his fare; Thomson fell asleep in the boat, and was rowed back again; and Burns sent a low fellow, one John Barleycorn, an old companion of his, who had conducted him to the other world, to say that he had during his lifetime been drawn out of his retirement as a show, only to be made an exciseman of, and that he would rather remain where he was. He desired, however, to shake hands by his representative—the hand, thus held out, was in a burning fever, and shook prodigiously.

The room was hung round with several portraits of eminent painters. While we were debating whether we should demand speech with these masters of mute eloquence, whose features were so familiar to us, it seemed that all at once they glided from their frames, and seated themselves at some little distance from us. There was Leonardo, with his majestic beard and watchful eye, having a bust of Archimedes before him; next him was Raphael's graceful head turned round to the Fornarina; and on his other side was Lucretia Borgia, with calm, golden locks; Michael Angelo had placed the model of St. Peter's on the table before him; Corregio had an angel at his side; Titian was seated with his mistress between himself and Giorgione; Guido was accompanied by his own Aurora, who took a dice-box from him; Claude held a mirror in his hand; Rubens patted a beautiful panther (led in by a satyr) on the head; Vandyke appeared as his own Paris, and Rembrandt was hid under firs, gold chains, and jewels, which Sir Joshua eyed closely, holding his hand so as to shade his forehead. Not a word was spoken; and as we rose to do them homage, they still presented the same surface to the view. Not being *bona-fide* representations of living people, we got rid of the splendid apparitions by signs and dumb show. As soon as they had melted into thin air, there was a loud noise at the outer door, and we found it was Giotto, Cimabue, and

Ghirlandajo, who had been raised from the dead by their earnest desire to see their illustrious successors—

> "Whose names on earth
> In Fame's eternal records live for aye!"

Finding them gone, they had no ambition to be seen after them, and mournfully withdrew. "Egad!" said Lamb, "these are the very fellows I should like to have had some talk with, to know how they could see to paint when all was dark around them."

"But shall we have nothing to say," interrogated G. J——, "to the 'Legend of Good Women'?" "Name, name, Mr. J——," cried Hunt in a boisterous tone of friendly exultation, "name as many as you please, without reserve or fear of molestation!" J—— was perplexed between so many amiable recollections, that the name of the lady of his choice expired in a pensive whiff of his pipe; and Lamb impatiently declared for the Duchess of Newcastle. Mrs. Hutchinson was no sooner mentioned, than she carried the day from the Duchess. We were the less solicitous on this subject of filling up the posthumous lists of good women, as there was already one in the room as good, as sensible, and in all respects as exemplary, as the best of them could be for their lives! "I should like vastly to have seen Ninon de l'Enclos," said that incomparable person; and this immediately put us in mind that we had neglected to pay honor due to our friends on the other side of the Channel: Voltaire, the patriarch of levity, and Rousseau, the father of sentiment; Montaigne and Rabelais (great in wisdom and in wit); Molière and that illustrious group that are collected round him (in the print of that subject) to hear him read his comedy of the "Tartuffe" at the house of Ninon; Racine, La Fontaine, Rochefoucauld, St. Evremont, etc.

"There is one person," said a shrill, querulous voice, "I would rather see than all these—Don Quixote!"

"Come, come!" said Hunt; "I thought we should have no heroes, real or fabulous. What say you, Mr. Lamb? Are you for eking out your shadowy list with such names as Alexander, Julius Cæsar, Tamerlane, or Ghengis Khan?" "Excuse me," said Lamb; "on the subject of characters in active life, plotters and disturbers of the world, I have a crotchet of my own, which

I beg leave to reserve." "No, no! come out with your worthies!" "What do you think of Guy Fawkes and Judas Iscariot?" Hunt turned an eye upon him like a wild Indian, but cordial and full of smothered glee. "Your most exquisite reason!" was echoed on all sides; and Ayrton thought that Lamb had now fairly entangled himself. "Why, I cannot but think," retorted he of the wistful countenance, "that Guy Fawkes, that poor, fluttering, annual scarecrow of straw and rags, is an ill-used gentleman. I would give something to see him sitting pale and emaciated, surrounded by his matches and his barrels of gunpowder, and expecting the moment that was to transport him to Paradise for his heroic self-devotion; but if I say any more, there is that fellow Godwin will make something of it. And as to Judas Iscariot, my reason is different. I would fain see the face of him who, having dipped his hand in the same dish with the Son of Man, could afterwards betray him. I have no conception of such a thing; nor have I ever seen any picture (not even Leonardo's very fine one) that gave me the least idea of it." "You have said enough, Mr. Lamb, to justify your choice."

"Oh! ever right, Menenius—ever right!"

"There is only one other person I can ever think of after this," continued Lamb; but without mentioning a name that once put on a semblance of mortality. "If Shakespeare was to come into the room, we should all rise up to meet him; but if that person was to come into it, we should all fall down and try to kiss the hem of his garment!"

As a lady present seemed now to get uneasy at the turn the conversation had taken, we rose up to go. The morning broke with that dim, dubious light by which Giotto, Cimabue, and Ghirlandajo must have seen to paint their earliest works; and we parted to meet again and renew similar topics at night, the next night, and the night after that, till that night overspread Europe which saw no dawn. The same event, in truth, broke up our little congress that broke up the great one. But that was to meet again: our deliberations have never been resumed.

CHOICE EXAMPLES OF CLASSIC SCULPTURE.

POSEIDON.

Photogravure from the marble statue in the Lateran Gallery at Rome.

Poseidon was identified by the Romans with Neptune, the god of the sea. He is here represented spurning a ship with his foot, and bearing in his right hand the *aplustre* or stern decoration of a galley—one of the spoils of the tempest. The statue was found at Porto, near Ostia, where it had stood as a landmark at the harbor's mouth. The legs and arms are modern restorations. The dolphin is the emblematic animal sacred to Neptune, and the trident is his sceptre. The author of this work is not known, but it belonged to the later period of Greek sculpture, and is in the style of the fourth century before Christ, or even later.

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THE WORLD OF BOOKS

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A FEW THOUGHTS ON SLEEP

—

DEATHS OF LITTLE CHILDREN

—

BY

LEIGH HUNT

LEIGH HUNT

1784—1859

James Henry Leigh Hunt was the son of a West Indian, who, resident in the United States, had remained a firm loyalist, and after the declaration of independence found it advisable to take up his residence in England. The poet was born at Southgate, Middlesex, and received his education at Christ's Hospital, which he left "in the same rank, at the same age, and for the same reasons, as Lamb." In 1805 he joined his brother in editing a newspaper called the "News," and shortly afterwards established the "Examiner," which still exists. A conviction for libel on the prince regent detained him in prison for two years, the happiest portion of his life: he was free from the worry and care which never afterwards forsook him. Soon after he left prison he published the "Story of Rimini," an Italian tale in verse (1816), which contains some exquisite poetry, both as to conception and execution. About 1818 he started the "Indicator," a weekly paper, in imitation of the "Spectator;" and in 1822 he went to Italy, to assist Lord Byron and Shelley in their projected paper called the "Liberal." Shelley died soon after Hunt's arrival in Italy; and though Hunt was kindly received by Byron, and lived for a time in his house, there was no congeniality between them. The "Liberal" was discontinued, and they parted on bad terms. On his return to England, Hunt published an account of "Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries," which was universally condemned as both ungenerous and unjust. He continued to write for periodicals, and published various poems from time to time, of which one of the most celebrated was "Captain Sword and Captain Pen." He died in 1859, at the age of seventy-five, having enjoyed during the latter years of his life a pension of £200 a year from the Crown.

Leigh Hunt's poetry is graceful, sprightly, and full of fancy. Though not possessing much soul and emotion, it has true life and genius, while here and there his verse is lit up with wit, or glows with tenderness and grace. His prose writings consist of essays, collected under the title of the "Indicator and his Companions;" "Sir Ralph Esher," a novel; "The Old Court Suburb;" and his lives of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar, prefixed to his edition of their dramatic writings.

His essays are deservedly popular. They abound in literary anecdote and poetical feeling, and many of them present fine sketches both of town and country life. "The World of Books," "A Few Thoughts on Sleep," and "Deaths of Little Children" are classed among his best essays.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

Difficulty of Proving that a Man is not Actually in a Distant Place, by Dint of Being There in Imagination—Visit of that Kind to Scotland —Suggestion of a Book-Geography; of Maps, in which None but Poetical or Otherwise Intellectually-Associated Places are Set Down —Scottish, English, French, and Italian Items for Such Maps—Local Literizations of Rousseau and Wordsworth Objected to—Actual Enrichment of the Commonest Places by Intellectual Associations.

To the Editor of Tait's Magazine:

SIR:—To write in your magazine makes me feel as if I, at length, had the pleasure of being personally in Scotland, a gratification which I have not yet enjoyed in any other way. I dive into my channel of communication, like another Alpheus, and reappear in the shop of Mr. Tait; not pursuing, I trust, anything *fugitive*, but behaving very unlike a river-god, and helping to bring forth an Edinburgh periodical.

Nor will you, sir, who enter so much into the interests of your fellow-creatures, and know so well of what their faculties are capable, look upon this kind of presence as a thing so purely unreal as might be supposed. Our strongest proofs of the existence of anything amounts but to a proportionate belief to that effect: and it would puzzle a wise man, though not a fool, to prove to himself that I was not, in some spiritual measure, in any place where I chose to pitch my imagination. I notice this metaphysical subtlety merely, in the first place, to balk your friend the Pechler, should he think it a settled thing that a man cannot be in two places at once (which would be a very green assumption of his); and, secondly, the better to impress a conviction which I have—that I know Scotland very well, and have been there many times.

Whether we go to another country on these occasions, in the manner of a thing spiritual, our souls being pitched out of ourselves like rockets or meteors; or whether the country comes

to us, and our large souls are inhabited by it for the time being, upon the principle of the greater including the less—the mind of man being a far more capacious thing than any set of square miles—I shall leave the curious to determine; but if I am not intimate with the very best parts of Scotland, and have not seen them a thousand times, then do I know nothing of Burns, or Allan Ramsay, or Walter Scott, or Smollett, or Ossian, or James I or V, or snoods, or cockernonies, or gloamin', or birks and burnies, or plaids, bonnets, or philibegs, or John Knox, or Queen Mary, or the Canongate, or the Calton Hill, or Hume and Robertson, or Tweedside, or a haggis, or cakes, or heather, or reels and strathspeys, or Glengarry, or all the clans, or Auld Robin Gray, or a mist, or rappee, or second sight, or the kirk, or the cutty-stool, or golf and hurling, or the border, or Bruce and Wallace, or bagpipes, or bonnie lasses.

"A lover's plaid and a bed of heath," says the right poetical Allan Cunningham, "are favorite topics with the Northern muse. When the heather is in bloom, it is worthy of becoming the couch of beauty. A sea of brown blossom, undulating as far as the eye can reach, and swarming with wild bees, is a fine sight." Sir, I have seen it a million times, though I never set eyes on it.

Who that has ever read it, is not put into visual possession of the following scene in the "Gentle Shepherd"?

> "A flowrie howm between twa verdant braes,
> Where lasses used to wash and spread their claes;
> A trotting burnie, wimpling through the ground,
> Its channel pebbles shining smooth and round;
> Here view twa barefoot beauties, clean and clear."

Or this?—

> "The open field.—A cottage in a glen;
> An auld wife spinning at the sunny en'."

Or this other, a perfect domestic picture?—

> "While Peggy laces up her bosom fair,
> Wi' a blue snood Jenny binds up her hair;
> Glaud by a morning ingle takes a beek,
> The rising sun shines motty through the reek;
> A pipe his mouth, the lasses please his een,
> And now and then a joke maun intervene."

The globe we inhabit is divisible into two worlds: one hardly less tangible, and far more known than the other—the common geographical world, and the world of books; and the latter may be as geographically set forth. A man of letters, conversant with poetry and romance, might draw out a very curious map, in which this world of books should be delineated and filled up, to the delight of all genuine readers, as truly as that in Guthrie or Pinkerton. To give a specimen, and begin with Scotland—Scotland would not be the mere territory it is, with a scale of so many miles to a degree, and such and such a population. Who (except a patriot or a cosmopolite) cares for the miles or the men, or knows that they exist, in any degree of consciousness with which he cares for the never-dying population of books? How many generations of men have passed away, and will pass, in Ayrshire or Dumfries, and not all the myriads be as interesting to us as a single Burns? What have we known of them, or shall ever know, whether lairds, lords, or ladies, in comparison with the inspired ploughman? But we know of the bards and the lasses, and the places which he has recorded in song; we know the scene of "Tam o' Shanter's" exploit; we know the pastoral landscapes above quoted, and the scenes immortalized in Walter Scott and the old ballads; and, therefore, the book-map of Scotland would present us with the most prominent of these. We should have the border, with its banditti, towns, and woods; Tweedside, Melrose, and Roslin, "Edina," otherwise called Edinburgh and Auld Reekie, or the town of Hume, Robertson, and others; Woodhouselee, and other classical and haunted places; the bower built by the fair hands of "Bessie Bell" and "Mary Gray"; the farmhouses of Burns's friends; the scenes of his loves and sorrows; the land of "Old Mortality," of the "Gentle Shepherd," and of Ossian. The Highlands, and the great blue billowy domains of heather, would be distinctly marked out, in their most poetical regions; and we should have the tracks of Ben Jonson to Hawthornden, of "Rob Roy" to his hiding-places, and of "Jeanie Deans" towards England. Abbotsford, be sure, would not be left out; nor the house of the "Antiquary," almost as real a man as his author. Nor is this all: for we should have older Scotland, the Scotland of James I, and of "Peebles at the Play," and Gawin Douglas, and Bruce, and Wallace; we

should have older Scotland, still, the Scotland of Ariosto, with his tale of "Ginevra," and the new "Andromeda," delivered from the sea-monster at the Isle of Ebuda (the Hebrides); and there would be the residence of the famous "Launcelot of the Lake," at Berwick, called the Joyeuse Garde, and other ancient sites of chivalry and romance; nor should the nightingale be left out in "Ginevra's" bower, for Ariosto has put it there, and there, accordingly, it is and has been heard, let ornithology say what it will; for what ornithologist knows so much of the nightingale as a poet? We would have an inscription put on the spot—"Here the nightingale sings, contrary to what has been affirmed by White and others."

This is the Scotland of books, and a beautiful place it is. I will venture to affirm, sir, even to yourself, that it is a more beautiful place than the other Scotland, always excepting to an exile or a lover; for the former is piqued to prefer what he must not touch; and, to the latter, no spot is so charming as the ugliest place that contains his beauty. Not that Scotland has not many places literally as well as poetically beautiful: I know that well enough. But you see that young man there, turning down the corner of the dullest spot in Edinburgh, with a dead-wall over against it, and delight in his eyes? He sees No. 4, the house where the girl lives he is in love with. Now what that place is to him, all places are, in their proportion, to the lover of books, for he has beheld them by the light of imagination and sympathy.

China, sir, is a very unknown place to us—in one sense of the word unknown; but who is not intimate with it as the land of tea, and *china* and ko-tous, and pagodas, and mandarins, and Confucius, and conical caps, and people with little names, little eyes, and little feet, who sit in little bowers, drinking little cups of tea, and writing little odes? The Jesuits, and the tea-cups, and the novel of "Ju-Kiao-Li," have made us well acquainted with it; better, a great deal, than millions of its inhabitants are acquainted—fellows who think it in the middle of the world, and know nothing of themselves. With one China they are totally unacquainted, to wit, the great China of the poet and old travellers, Cathay, "seat of Cathian Can," the country of which Ariosto's "Angelica" was princess-royal; yes, she was a Chinese, "the fairest of her sex, Angelica." It shows that

the ladies in that country must have greatly degenerated; for it is impossible to conceive that Ariosto, and Orlando, and Rinaldo, and King Sacripant, who was a Circassian, could have been in love with her for having eyes and feet like a pig. I will deviate here into a critical remark, which is, that the Italian poets seem to have considered people the handsomer the farther you went north. The old traveller, it is true, found a good deal of the beauty that depends on red and white, in Tartary and other western regions; and a fine complexion is highly esteemed in the swarthy south. But "Astolfo," the Englishman, is celebrated for his beauty by the Italian poets; the unrivalled "Angelica" was a Chinese; and the handsomest of Ariosto's heroes, "Zerbino," of whom he writes the famous passage, "that nature made him, and then broke the mould," was a Scotchman. The poet had probably seen some very handsome Scotchman in Romagna. With this piece of "bribery and corruption" to your national readers, I return to my subject.

Book-England, on the map, would shine as the Albion of the old Giants; as the "Logres" of the Knights of the Round Table; as the scene of Amadis of Gaul, with its island of Windsor; as the abode of fairies, of the Druids, of the divine Countess of Coventry, of Guy, Earl of Warwick, of "Alfred" (whose reality was a romance), of the fair Rosamond, of the "Arcades" and "Comus" of Chaucer and Spenser, of the poets of the Globe and the Mermaid, the wits of Twickenham and Hampton court. Fleet-street would be Johnson's Fleet-street; the Tower would belong to Julius Cæsar; and Blackfriars to Suckling, Vandyke, and the "Dunciad." Chronology and the mixture of truth and fiction, that is to say, of one sort of truth and another, would come to nothing in a work of this kind; for, as it has been before observed, things are real in proportion as they are impressive. And who has not as "gross, open, and palpable" an idea of "Falstaff" in Eastcheap, as of "Captain Grose" himself, beating up his quarters? A map of fictitious, literary, and historical London, would, of itself, constitute a great curiosity. So would one of Edinburgh, or of any other city in which there have been great men and romantic events, whether the latter were real or fictitious. Swift speaks of maps, in which they

"Place elephants for want of towns."

Here would be towns and elephants too, the popular and the prodigious. How much would not Swift do for Ireland, in this geography of wit and talent! What a figure would not St. Patrick's Cathedral make! The other day, mention was made of a "Dean of St. Patrick's" *now living;* as if there was, or ever could be, more than one Dean of St. Patrick's! In the Irish maps we should have the saint himself driving out all venomous creatures; (what a pity that the most venomous retain a property as absentees!) and there would be the old Irish kings, and O'Donoghue with his White Horse, and the lady of the "gold wand," who made the miraculous virgin pilgrimage, and all the other marvels of lakes and ladies, and the Round Towers still remaining to perplex the antiquary, and Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," and Goldsmith himself, and the birthplaces of Steele and Sterne, and the brief hour of poor Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and Carolan with his harp, and the schools of the poor Latin boys under the hedges, and Castle Rackrent, and Edgeworth's town, and the Giant's Causeway, and Ginleas and other classical poverties, and Spenser's castle on the river Mulla, with the wood-gods whom his pipe drew around him. Ireland is wild ground still; and there are some that would fain keep it so, like a forest to hunt in.

The French map would present us with the woods and warriors of old Gaul, and Lucan's witch; with Charlemagne and his court at Tours; with the siege of Paris by the Saracens, and half the wonders of Italian poetry; with Angelica and Medoro; with the castles of Orlando and Rinaldo, and the traitor Gan; with part of the great forest of Ardenne (Rosalind being in it); with the gentle territory of the Troubadours, and Navarre; with "Love's Labor Lost," and "Vaucluse"; with Petrarch and Laura, and the pastoral scenes of D'Urfé's romance, and the "Men-Wolves" of Brittany, and the "Fairy of Lusignan." Napoleon, also (for he too was a romance), should be drawn as a giant, meeting the allied forces in the neighborhood of Paris.

Italy would be covered with ancient and modern romance; with Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Dante, Boccaccio, etc., with classical villas, and scenes elysian and infernal. There would be the region of Saturn during his Age of Gold, and the old Tuscan cities, and Phaeton in the north, and the sirens and fairies at

Naples, and Polyphemus in Sicily, with the abodes of Boiardo and Ariosto, and Horace's Mount Soracte, and the Cross of St. Peter, and the city in the sea, and the golden scenes of Titian and Raphael, and other names that make us hear the music of their owners: Pythagoras also with his philosophy, and Petrarch with his lute. A circle of stars would tell us where Galileo lived; and the palace of Doria would look more than royal toward the sea.

I dare not, in this hasty sketch, and with limited time before me, indulge myself in other luxuries of recollection, or do anything more than barely mention the names of Spain, Fontarabia, and Cervantes; of Greece; of Persia, and the "Arabian Nights"; of Mount Caucasus, and Turkey, and the Gothic North; of El Dorado and Columbus; or the sea-snakes, floating islands, and other marvels of the ocean; not forgetting the Atalantis of Plato, and the regions of Gulliver and Peter Wilkins. Neither can I have the pleasure of being suffocated with contemplating, at proper length, the burning deserts of Africa; or of hearing the ghastly sounds of its old Satyrs and Ægipans in their woody hills at night-time, described by Pomponius Mela; or of seeing the Stormy Spirit of the Cape, stationed there forever by Camoens, and whose stature on the map would be like a mountain. You will be good enough to take this paper as nothing but a hint of what such a map might contain.

One word, however, respecting a heresy in fictitious belief, which has been uttered by Rousseau, and repeated, I am sorry to say, by our excellent poet Wordsworth, the man of all men who ought not to reduce a matter of fact to what might be supposed to be its poverty. Rousseau, speaking of the banks of the Lignon, where the scene of the old French romance is laid, expresses his disappointment at finding there nothing like the beautiful things he fancied in his childhood; and Mr. Wordsworth in his poem of "Yarrow, Visited and Revisited," utters a like regret, in speaking of the scene of the "bonny bride—the winsome marrow." I know there is such an opinion abroad, like many other errors; but it does not become men of imagination to give in to it; and I must protest against it, as a flat irreligion. I do not pretend to be as romantic in my conduct as the Genevese philosopher, or as poetical in my nature as the bard of Rydal Mount; but I have, by nature, perhaps, greater

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animal spirits than either; and a bit of health is a fine prism to see fancies by. It may be granted, for the sake of argument, that the book-Lignon and the book-Yarrow are still finer things than the Lignon and Yarrow geographical; but to be actually on the spot, to look with one's own eyes upon the places in which our favorite heroes or heroines underwent the circumstances that made us love them—this may surely make up for an advantage on the side of the description in the book; and, in addition to this, we have the pleasure of seeing how much has been done for the place by love and poetry. I have seen various places in Europe, which have been rendered interesting by great men and their works; and I never found myself the worse for seeing them, but the better. I seem to have made friends with them in their own houses: to have walked, and talked, and suffered, and enjoyed with them; and if their books have made the places better, the books themselves were there which made them so, and which grew out of them. The poet's hand was on the place, blessing it. I can no more separate this idea from the spot, than I can take away from it any other beauty. Even in London, I find the principle hold good in me, though I have lived there many years, and, of course, associated it with every commonplace the most unpoetical. The greater still includes the less: and I can no more pass through Westminster, without thinking of Milton; or the Borough, without thinking of Chaucer and Shakespeare; or Gray's Inn, without calling Bacon to mind; or Bloomsbury Square, without Steele and Akenside—than I can prefer brick and mortar to wit and poetry, or not see a beauty upon it beyond architecture, in the splendor of the recollection. I once had duties to perform, which kept me out late at night, and severely taxed my health and spirits. My path lay through a neighborhood in which Dryden lived: and though nothing could be more commonplace, and I used to be tired to the heart and soul of me, I never hesitated to go a little out of the way, purely that I might pass through Gerard-street, and so give myself the shadow of a pleasant thought.

I am, sir, your cordial well-wisher,

A Lover of Books.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON SLEEP

THIS is an article for the reader to think of when he or she is warm in bed, a little before he goes to sleep, the clothes at his ear, and the wind moaning in some distant crevice.

"Blessings," exclaimed Sancho, "on him that first invented sleep! It wraps a man all round like a cloak." It is a delicious moment certainly—that of being well nestled in bed, and feeling that you shall drop gently to sleep. The good is to come, not past: the limbs have been just tired enough to render the remaining in one posture delightful: the labor of the day is done. A gentle failure of the perceptions comes creeping over one, the spirit of consciousness disengages itself more and more, with slow and hushing degrees, like a mother detaching her hand from that of her sleeping child; the mind seems to have a balmy lid closing over it, like the eye;—'tis closing;—'tis more closing;—'tis closed. The mysterious spirit has gone to take its airy rounds.

It is said that sleep is best before midnight: and Nature herself, with her darkness and chilling dews, informs us so. There is another reason for going to bed betimes; for it is universally acknowledged that lying late in the morning is a great shortener of life. At least, it is never found in company with longevity. It also tends to make people corpulent. But these matters belong rather to the subject of early rising than of sleep.

Sleep at a late hour in the morning is not half so pleasant as the more timely one. It is sometimes, however, excusable, especially to a watchful or overworked head; neither can we deny the seducing merits of "t' other doze," the pleasing wilfulness of nestling in a new posture, when you know you ought to be up, like the rest of the house. But then you cut up the day, and your sleep the next night.

In the course of the day few people think of sleeping, except after dinner; and then it is often rather a hovering and nodding on the borders of sleep than sleep itself. This is a privilege allowable, we think, to none but the old, or the sickly, or the very tired and careworn; and it should be well understood before it is exercised in company. To escape into slumber from an argument; or to take it as an affair of course, only between you and your biliary duct; or to assent with involuntary nods to all that you have just been disputing, is not so well; much less, to sit nodding and tottering beside a lady; or to be in danger of dropping your head into the fruit-plate or your host's face; or of waking up, and saying "Just so" to the bark of a dog, or "Yes, madam," to the black at your elbow.

Careworn people, however, might refresh themselves oftener with day-sleep than they do; if their bodily state is such as to dispose them to it. It is a mistake to suppose that all care is wakeful. People sometimes sleep, as well as wake, by reason of their sorrow. The difference seems to depend upon the nature of their temperament; though in the most excessive cases, sleep is perhaps nature's never-failing relief, as swooning is upon the rack. A person with jaundice in his blood shall lie down and go to sleep at noonday, when another of a different complexion shall find his eyes as unclosable as a statue's, though he has had no sleep for nights together. Without meaning to lessen the dignity of suffering, which has quite enough to do with its waking hours, it is this that may often account for the profound sleeps enjoyed the night before hazardous battles, executions, and other demands upon an overexcited spirit.

The most complete and healthy sleep that can be taken in the day is in summer-time, out in a field. There is, perhaps, no solitary sensation so exquisite as that of slumbering on the grass or hay, shaded from the hot sun by a tree, with the consciousness of a fresh but light air running through the wide atmosphere, and the sky stretching far overhead upon all sides. Earth and heaven and a placid humanity seem to have the creation to themselves. There is nothing between the slumberer and the naked and glad innocence of nature.

Next to this, but at a long interval, the most relishing snatch

of slumber out of bed is the one which a tired person takes before he retires for the night, while lingering in his sitting-room. The consciousness of being very sleepy, and of having the power to go to bed immediately, gives great zest to the unwillingness to move. Sometimes he sits nodding in his chair; but the sudden and leaden jerks of the head to which a state of great sleepiness renders him liable, are generally too painful for so luxurious a moment; and he gets into a more legitimate posture, sitting sideways with his head on the chair-back, or throwing his legs up at once on another chair, and half reclining. It is curious, however, to find how long an inconvenient posture will be borne for the sake of this foretaste of repose. The worst of it is, that on going to bed the charm sometimes vanishes; perhaps from the colder temperature of the chamber; for a fireside is a great opiate.

Speaking of the painful positions into which a sleepy lounger will get himself, it is amusing to think of the more fantastic attitudes that so often take place in bed. If we could add anything to the numberless things that have been said about sleep by the poets, it would be upon this point. Sleep never shows himself a greater leveller. A man in his waking moments may look as proud and self-possessed as he pleases. He may walk proudly, he may sit proudly, he may eat his dinner proudly; he may shave himself with an air of infinite superiority; in a word, he may show himself grand and absurd upon the most trifling occasions. But Sleep plays the petrifying magician. He arrests the proudest lord as well as the humblest clown in the most ridiculous postures: so that if you could draw a grandee from his bed without waking him, no limb-twisting fool in a pantomime should create wilder laughter. The toy with the string between its legs is hardly a posture-master more extravagant. Imagine a despot lifted up to the gaze of his valets, with his eyes shut, his mouth open, his left hand under his right ear, his other twisted and hanging helplessly before him like an idiot's, one knee lifted up, and the other leg stretched out, or both knees huddled up together;—what a scarecrow to lodge majestic power in!

But Sleep is kindly even in his tricks, and the poets have treated him with proper reverence. According to the ancient mythologists he had even one of the Graces to wife. He had

a thousand sons, of whom the chief were Morpheus, or the Shaper; Icelos, or the Likely; Phantasus, the Fancy; and Phobetor, the Terror. His dwelling some writers place in a dull and darkling part of the earth; others, with greater compliment, in heaven; and others, with another kind of propriety, by the seashore. There is a good description of it in Ovid;[1] but in these abstracted tasks of poetry the moderns outvie the ancients; and there is nobody who has built his bower for him so finely as Spenser. Archimago, in the first book of the "Faerie Queene" (canto I. st. 39), sends a little spirit down to Morpheus to fetch him a dream:

"He, making speedy way through spersed ayre,
And through the world of waters, wide and deepe,
To Morpheus' house doth hastily repaire.
Amid the bowels of the earth full steepe
And low, where dawning day doth never peepe,
His dwelling is. There Tethys his wet bed
Doth ever wash; and Cynthia still doth steepe
In silver dew his ever-drouping head,
Whiles sad Night over him her mantle black doth spred.

"And more to lull him in his slumber soft
A trickling streame from high rocke tumbling downe,
And ever-drizzling rain upon the loft,
Mixed with a murmuring winde, much like the soune
Of swarming bees, did cast him in a swoune.
No other noise, nor people's troublous cryes,
As still are wont to annoy the walled towne,
Might there be heard; but careless Quiet lyes,
Wrapt in eternall silence, far from enimyes."

Chaucer[2] has drawn the cave of the same god with greater simplicity; but nothing can have a more deep and sullen effect than his cliffs and cold running waters. It seems as real as an actual solitude, or some quaint old picture in a book of travels in Tartary. He is telling the story of Ceyx and Alcyone in the poem called his "Dream." Juno tells a messenger to go to Morpheus and "bid him creep into the body" of the drowned king, to let his wife know the fatal event by his apparition.

"This messenger tooke leave, and went
Upon his way; and never he stent

[1] "Metamorphoses," xi. 586.

[2] "Book of the Duchess," 153 *et seq.*

Till he came to the dark valley,
That stant betweene rockes twey.
There never yet grew corne, ne gras.
Ne tree, ne nought, that aught was.
Beast, ne man, ne naught else;
Save that there were a few wells
Came running fro the cliffs adowne,
That made a deadly sleeping soune,
And runnen downe right by a cave,
That was under a rocky grave,
Amid the valley, wonder-deepe.
There these goddis lay asleepe,
Morpheus and Eclympasteire,
That was the god of Sleepis heire,
That slept and did none other worke."

Where the credentials of this new son and heir, Eclympasteire,[3] are to be found, we know not; but he acts very much, it must be allowed, like an heir-presumptive, in sleeping and doing "none other work."

We dare not trust ourselves with many quotations upon sleep from the poets; they are so numerous as well as beautiful. We must content ourselves with mentioning that our two most favorite passages are one in the "Philoctetes"[4] of Sophocles, admirable for its contrast to a scene of terrible agony, which it closes; and the other the following address in Beaumont and Fletcher's tragedy of "Valentinian,"[5] the hero of which is also a sufferer under bodily torment. He is in a chair, slumbering; and these most exquisite lines are gently sung with music:

"Care-charming Sleep, thou easer of all woes,
Brother to Death, sweetly thyself dispose
On this afflicted prince. Fall like a cloud
In gentle showers: give nothing that is loud
Or painful to his slumbers: easy, sweet,
And as a purling stream, thou son of Night,
Pass by his troubled senses; sing his pain
Like hollow murmuring wind, or silver rain:
Into this prince, gently, oh gently slide,
And kiss him into slumbers, like a bride."

[3] The derivation is disputed. The name, according to Ten Brink, is of Chaucer's own invention. Prof. Skeat derives it from "*Icelon plastera*" (acc. of πλαστής)—the semblance-moulder.

[4] Lines 827 *seq.*

[5] Act v. sc. ii.

How earnest and prayer-like are these pauses! How lightly sprinkled, and yet how deeply settling, like rain, the fancy! How quiet, affectionate, and perfect the conclusion!

Sleep is most graceful in an infant, soundest in one who has been tired in the open air, completest to the seaman after a hard voyage, most welcome to the mind haunted with one idea, most touching to look at in the parent that has wept, lightest in the playful child, proudest in the bride adored.

DEATHS OF LITTLE CHILDREN

A GRECIAN philosopher being asked why he wept for the death of his son, since the sorrow was in vain, replied, "I weep on that account." And his answer became his wisdom. It is only for sophists to contend that we, whose eyes contain the fountains of tears, need never give way to them. It would be unwise not to do so on some occasions. Sorrow unlocks them in her balmy moods. The first bursts may be bitter and overwhelming; but the soil on which they pour would be worse without them. They refresh the fever of the soul—the dry misery which parches the countenance into furrows, and renders us liable to our most terrible "flesh-quakes."

There are sorrows, it is true, so great, that to give them some of the ordinary vents is to run a hazard of being overthrown. These we must rather strengthen ourselves to resist, or bow quietly and drily down, in order to let them pass over us, as the traveller does the wind of the desert. But where we feel that tears would relieve us, it is false philosophy to deny ourselves at least that first refreshment; and it is always false consolation to tell people that because they cannot help a thing, they are not to mind it. The true way is, to let them grapple with the unavoidable sorrow, and try to win it into gentleness by a reasonable yielding. There are griefs so gentle in their very nature that it would be worse than false heroism to refuse them a tear. Of this kind are the deaths of infants. Particular circumstances may render it more or less advisable to indulge in grief for the loss of a little child; but, in general, parents should be no more advised to repress their first tears on such an occasion, than to repress their smiles towards a child surviving, or to indulge in any other sympathy. It is an appeal to the same gentle tenderness; and such appeals are never made in vain. The end of them is an

acquittal from the harsher bonds of affliction—from the tying down of the spirit to one melancholy idea.

It is the nature of tears of this kind, however strongly they may gush forth, to run into quiet waters at last. We cannot easily, for the whole course of our lives, think with pain of any good and kind person whom we have lost. It is the divine nature of their qualities to conquer pain and death itself; to turn the memory of them into pleasure; to survive with a placid aspect in our imaginations. We are writing at this moment just opposite a spot which contains the grave of one[1] inexpressibly dear to us. We see from our windows the trees about it, and the church-spire. The green fields lie around. The clouds are travelling overhead, alternately taking away the sunshine and restoring it. The vernal winds, piping of the flowery summer-time, are nevertheless calling to mind the far-distant and dangerous ocean, which the heart that lies in that grave had many reasons to think of. And yet the sight of this spot does not give us pain. So far from it, it is the existence of that grave which doubles every charm of the spot; which links the pleasures of our childhood and manhood together; which puts a hushing tenderness in the winds and a patient joy upon the landscape; which seems to unite heaven and earth, mortality and immortality, the grass of the tomb and the grass of the green field; and gives a more maternal aspect to the whole kindness of nature. It does not hinder gayety itself. Happiness was what its tenant, through all her troubles, would have diffused. To diffuse happiness, and to enjoy it, is not only carrying on her wishes, but realizing her hopes; and gayety, freed from its only pollutions, malignity and want of sympathy, is but a child playing about the knees of its mother.

The remembered innocence and endearments of a child stand us instead of virtues that have died older. Children have not exercised the voluntary offices of friendship; they have not chosen to be kind and good to us; nor stood by us, from conscious will, in the hour of adversity. But they have shared their pleasures and pains with us as well as they could; the interchange of good offices between us has, of necessity, been less mingled with the troubles of the world; the sorrow arising

[1] The grave of the essayist's mother, at Hampstead.

from their death is the only one which we can associate with their memories. These are happy thoughts that cannot die. Our loss may always render them pensive; but they will not always be painful. It is a part of the benignity of nature that pain does not survive like pleasure, at any time, much less where the cause of it is an innocent one. The smile will remain reflected by memory, as the moon reflects the light upon us when the sun has gone into heaven.

When writers like ourselves quarrel with earthly pain (we mean writers of the same intentions, without implying, of course, anything about abilities or otherwise), they are misunderstood if they are supposed to quarrel with pains of every sort. This would be idle and effeminate. They do not pretend, indeed, that humanity might not wish, if it could, to be entirely free from pain; for it endeavors, at all times, to turn pain into pleasure; or at least to set off the one with the other, to make the former a zest and the latter a refreshment. The most unaffected dignity of suffering does this, and, if wise, acknowledges it. The greatest benevolence towards others, the most unselfish relish of their pleasures, even at its own expense, does but look to increasing the general stock of happiness, though content, if it could, to have its identity swallowed up in that splendid contemplation. We are far from meaning that this is to be called selfishness. We are far, indeed, from thinking so, or of so confounding words. But neither is it to be called pain when most unselfish, if disinterestedness be truly understood. The pain that is in it softens into pleasure, as the darker hue of the rainbow melts into the brighter. Yet even if a harsher line is to be drawn between the pain and pleasure of the most unselfish mind (and ill-health, for instance, may draw it), we should not quarrel with it if it contributes to the general mass of comfort, and were of a nature which general kindliness could not avoid. Made as we are, there are certain pains without which it would be difficult to conceive certain great and overbalancing pleasures. We may conceive it possible for beings to be made entirely happy; but in our composition something of pain seems to be a necessary ingredient, in order that the materials may turn to as fine account as possible, though our clay, in the course of ages and experience, may be refined more and

more. We may get rid of the worst earth, though not of earth itself.

Now, the liability to the loss of children—or rather what renders us sensible of it, the occasional loss itself—seems to be one of these necessary bitters thrown into the cup of humanity. We do not mean that everyone must lose one of his children in order to enjoy the rest, or that every individual loss afflicts us in the same proportion. We allude to the deaths of infants in general. These might be as few as we could render them. But if none at all ever took place, we should regard every little child as a man or a woman secured; and it will easily be conceived what a world of endearing cares and hopes this security would endanger. The very idea of infancy would lose its continuity with us. Girls and boys would be future men and women, not present children. They would have attained their full growth in our imaginations, and might as well have been men and women at once. On the other hand, those who have lost an infant, are never, as it were, without an infant child. They are the only persons who, in one sense, retain it always, and they furnish their neighbors with the same idea. The other children grow up to manhood and womanhood, and suffer all the changes of mortality. This one alone is rendered an immortal child. Death has arrested it with his kindly harshness, and blessed it into an eternal image of youth and innocence.

Of such as these are the pleasantest shapes that visit our fancy and our hopes. They are the ever-smiling emblems of joy, the prettiest pages that wait upon imagination. Lastly, " Of these is the kingdom of heaven." Wherever there is a province of that benevolent and all-accessible empire, whether on earth or elsewhere, such are the gentle spirits that must inhabit it. To such simplicity, or the resemblance of it, must they come. Such must be the ready confidence of their hearts and creativeness of their fancy. And so ignorant must they be of the " knowledge of good and evil," losing their discernment of that self-created trouble, by enjoying the garden before them, and not being ashamed of what is kindly and innocent.

CONVERSATION

(Two Essays)

BY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

1785—1859

Thomas De Quincey was born at Manchester in 1785. In 1800 he went to Eton, and in 1803 he was entered at Oxford, where he studied intermittently for the space of five years. While yet a very young man he adopted the baneful practice of opium eating, and thus shipwrecked both his fine intellect and his fortune. After encountering some of those strange adventures which he commemorates, and perhaps embellishes, in his "Confessions of an Opium Eater," he retired from London and became for some time a resident in the lake country, near his friends Wordsworth and Southey. De Quincey did not turn to literature except as an amusement until he was nearly forty, when pecuniary embarrassments induced him to become a contributor to the "London Magazine" and other periodicals. In 1832 he went to reside in Scotland, living at Edinburgh for the most part, in the seclusion which his taste no less than his feeble health required, until his death, which took place in 1859.

De Quincey is one of the most eloquent prose writers of the nineteenth century. His best passages will bear comparison with those of Milton, Taylor, or Hooker: they have the same gorgeous music, the same passionate abundance of thought. He is an unreliable critic, an erratic writer, an unscrupulous inventor of history, but as a rhetorician he is almost unrivalled.

The records of his learning and controversial power may pass with other curiosities and fleeting interests of the age; but the dreams and fantasies he has connected with the earlier epoch of his life, his solemn rhapsodies, the simple pathos of his best sketches, and the bright flashes of his humor are imperishable memorials of a peculiar genius.

Upon De Quincey's position in the literature of the present day an able critic observes, "De Quincey's mind never wholly recovered from the effects of his eighteen years' indulgence in opium. He himself says, half jocularly, but apparently quite truly, that it is characteristic of the opium-eater never to finish anything. He himself never finished anything, except his sentences, which are models of elaborate workmanship. But many of his essays are literally fragments, while those which are not generally convey the impression of being mere prolegomena to some far greater work of which he had formed the conception only." The two essays on "Conversation" show the exquisite finish of his style to great advantage.

CONVERSATION

(*First Essay*)

AMONGST the arts connected with the elegancies of social life, in a degree which nobody denies, is the art of conversation; but in a degree which almost everybody denies, if one may judge by their neglect of its simplest rules, this same art is not less connected with the uses of social life. Neither the luxury of conversation, nor the possible benefit of conversation, is to be under that rude administration of it which generally prevails. Without an art, without some simple system of rules, gathered from experience of such contingencies as are most likely to mislead the practice, when left to its own guidance, no act of man nor effort accomplishes its purposes in perfection. The sagacious Greek would not so much as drink a glass of wine amongst a few friends without a systematic art to guide him, and a regular form of polity to control him, which art and which polity (begging Plato's pardon) were better than any of more ambitious aim in his "Republic." Every *symposium* had its set of rules, and vigorous they were; had its own *symposiarch* to govern it, and a tyrant he was. Elected democratically, he became, when once installed, an autocrat not less despotic than the King of Persia. Purposes still more slight and fugitive have been organized into arts. Taking soup gracefully, under the difficulties opposed to it by a dinner dress at that time fashionable, was reared into an art about forty-five years ago by a Frenchman, who lectured upon it to ladies in London; and the most brilliant duchess of that day was amongst his best pupils. Spitting—if the reader will pardon the mention of so gross a fact—was shown to be a very difficult art, and publicly prelected upon about the same time, in the same great capital. The professors in this faculty were the hackney-coachmen; the pupils were gentlemen who paid a guinea each for three

lessons; the chief problem in this system of hydraulics being to throw the salivating column in a parabolic curve from the centre of Parliament-street, when driving four-in-hand, to the foot pavements, right and left, so as to alarm the consciences of guilty peripatetics on either side. The ultimate problem, which closed the curriculum of study, was held to lie in spitting round a corner; when that was mastered, the pupil was entitled to his doctor's degree. Endless are the purposes of man, merely festal or merely comic, and aiming but at the momentary life of a cloud, which have earned for themselves the distinction and apparatus of a separate art. Yet for conversation, the great paramount purpose of social meetings, no art exists or has been attempted.

That seems strange, but is not really so. A limited process submits readily to the limits of a technical system; but a process so unlimited as the interchange of thought, seems to reject them. And even, if an art of conversation were less unlimited, the means of carrying such an art into practical effect, amongst so vast a variety of minds, seem wanting. Yet again, perhaps, after all, this may rest on a mistake. What we begin by misjudging is the particular *phasis* of conversation which brings it under the control of art and discipline. It is not in its relation to the intellect that conversation ever has been improved or will be improved primarily, but in its relation to manners. Has a man ever mixed with what in technical phrase is called "good company," meaning company in the highest degree polished, company which (being or not being aristocratic as respects its composition) is aristocratic as respects the standard of its manners and usages? If he really has, and does not deceive himself from vanitiy or from pure inacquaintance with the world, in that case he must have remarked the large effect impressed upon the grace and upon the freedom of conversation by a few simple instincts of real good breeding. Good breeding—what is it? There is no need in this place to answer that question comprehensively; it is sufficient to say, that it is made up chiefly of negative elements; that it shows itself far less in what it prescribes, than in what it forbids. Now, even under this limitation of the idea, the truth is, that more will be done for the benefit of conversation by the simple magic of

good manners (that is, chiefly by a system of forbearances), applied to the besetting vices of social intercourse, than ever was or can be done by all varieties of intellectual power assembled upon the same arena. Intellectual graces of the highest order may perish and confound each other when exercised in a spirit of ill-temper, or under the license of bad manners; whereas, very humble powers, when allowed to expand themselves colloquially in that genial freedom which is possible only under the most absolute confidence in the self-restraint of your collocutors, accomplish their purpose to a certainty, if it be the ordinary purpose of liberal amusement, and have a chance of accomplishing it even when this purpose is the more ambitious one of communicating knowledge or exchanging new views upon truth.

In my own early years, having been formed by nature too exclusively and morbidly for solitary thinking, I observed nothing. Seeming to have eyes, in reality I saw nothing. But it is a matter of no very uncommon experience, that, whilst the mere observers never become meditators, the mere meditators, on the other hand, may finally ripen into close observers. Strength of thinking, through long years, upon innumerable themes, will have the effect of disclosing a vast variety of questions, to which it soon becomes apparent that answers are lurking up and down the whole field of daily experience; and thus an external experience which was slighted in youth, because it was a dark cipher that could be read into no meaning, a key that answered to no lock, gradually becomes interesting as it is found to yield one solution after another to problems that have independently matured in the mind. Thus, for instance, upon the special functions of conversation, upon its powers, its laws, its ordinary diseases, and their appropriate remedies, in youth I never bestowed a thought or a care. I viewed it, not as one amongst the gay ornamental arts of the intellect, but as one amongst the dull necessities of business. Loving solitude too much, I understood too little the capacities of colloquial intercourse. And thus it is, though not for my reason, that most people estimate the intellectual relations of conversation. Let these, however, be what they may, one thing seemed undeniable—that this world talked a great deal too much. It would be better for all parties, if nine in every ten

of the "winged words" flying about in this world (Homer's *epea pteroenta*) had their feathers clipped amongst men, or even amongst women, who have a right to a larger allowance of words. Yet, as it was quite out of my power to persuade the world into any such self-denying reformation, it seemed equally out of the line of my duties to nourish any moral anxiety in that direction. "To talk" seemed then in the same category as "to sleep"; not an accomplishment, but a base physical infirmity. As a moralist, I really was culpably careless upon the whole subject. I cared as little what absurdities men practised in their vast tennis-courts of conversation, where the ball is flying backwards and forwards to no purpose forever, as what tricks Englishmen might play with their monstrous national debt. Yet at length what I disregarded on any principle of moral usefulness, I came to make an object of the profoundest interest on principles of art. Betting, in like manner, and wagering, which apparently had no moral value, and for that reason had been always slighted as inconsiderable arts (though, by the way, they always had one valuable use, namely, that of evading quarrels, since a bet summarily intercepts an altercation), rose suddenly into a philosophic rank, when successively Huyghens, the Bernoullis, and De Moivre were led, by the suggestion of these trivial practices amongst men, to throw the light of a high mathematical analysis upon the whole doctrine of chances. Lord Bacon had been led to remark the capacities of conversation as an organ for sharpening one particular mode of intellectual power. Circumstances, on the other hand, led me into remarking the special capacities of conversation, as an organ for absolutely creating another mode of power. Let a man have read, thought, studied, as much as he may, rarely will he reach his possible advantages as a "ready" man, unless he has exercised his powers much in conversation—that was Lord Bacon's idea. Now, this wise and useful remark points in a direction not objective, but subjective—that is, it does not promise any absolute extension to truth itself, but only some greater facilities to the man who expounds or diffuses the truth. Nothing will be done for truth objectively that would not at any rate be done, but subjectively it will be done with more fluency, and at less cost of exertion to the doer. On the contrary, my own growng

reveries on the latent powers of conversation (which, though a thing that then I hated, yet challenged at times unavoidably my attention) pointed to an absolute birth of new insight into the truth itself, as inseparable from the finer and more scientific exercise of the talking art. It would not be the brilliancy, the ease, or the adroitness of the expounder that would benefit, but the absolute interests of the thing expounded. A feeling dawned on me of a secret magic lurking in the peculiar life, velocities, and contagious ardor of conversation, quite separate from any which belonged to books; arming a man with new forces, and not merely with a new dexterity in wielding the old ones. I felt, and in this I could not be mistaken, as too certainly it was a fact of my own experience, that in the electric kindling of life between two minds, and far less from the kindling natural to conflict (though that also is something) than from the kindling through sympathy with the object discussed, in its momentary coruscation of shifting phases, there sometimes arise glimpses and shy revelations of affinity, suggestion, relation, analogy, that could not have been approached through any avenues of methodical study. Great organists find the same effect of inspiration, the same result of power creative and revealing, in the mere movement and velocity of their own voluntaries, like the heavenly wheels of Milton, throwing off fiery flakes and bickering flames; these impromtu torrents of music create rapturous *fioriture,* beyond all capacity in the artist to register, or afterward to imitate. The reader must be well aware that many philosophic instances exist where a change in the degree makes a change in the kind. Usually this is otherwise; the prevailing rule is, that the principle subsists unaffected by any possible variation in the amount or degree of the force. But a large class of exceptions must have met the reader, though from want of a pencil he has improperly omitted to write them down in his pocket-book—cases, namely, where upon passing beyond a certain point in the graduation, an alteration takes place suddenly in the *kind* of effect, a new direction is given to the power. Some illustration of this truth occurs in conversation, where a velocity in the movement of thought is made possible (and often natural), greater than ever can arise in methodical books; and where, secondly, approximations are more obvi-

ous and easily effected between things too remote for a steadier contemplation. One remarkable evidence of a specific power lying hid in conversation may be seen in such writings as have moved by impulses most nearly resembling those of conversation; for instance, in those of Edmund Burke. For one moment, reader, pause upon the spectacle of two contrasted intellects, Burke's and Johnson's: one an intellect essentially going forward, governed by the very necessity of growth—by the law of motion in advance; the latter, essentially an intellect retrogressive, retrospective, and throwing itself back on its own steps. This original difference was aided accidentally in Burke by the tendencies of political partisanship, which, both from moving amongst moving things and uncertainties, as compared with the more stationary aspects of moral philosophy, and also from its more fluctuating and fiery passions, must unavoidably reflect in greater life the tumultuary character of conversation. The result from these original differences of intellectual constitution, aided by these secondary differences of pursuit, is, that Dr. Johnson never, in any instance, *grows* a truth before your eyes, whilst in the act of delivering it, or moving toward it. All that he offers up to the end of the chapter he had when he began. But to Burke, such was the prodigious elasticity of his thinking, equally in his conversation and in his writings, the mere act of movement became the principle or cause of movement. Motion propagated motion, and life threw off life. The very violence of a projectile, as thrown by him, caused it to rebound in fresh forms, fresh angles, splintering, coruscating, which gave out thoughts as new (and that would at the beginning have been as startling) to himself as they are to his reader. In this power, which might be illustrated largely from the writings of Burke, is seen something allied to the powers of a prophetic seer, who is compelled oftentimes into seeing things as unexpected by himself as by others. Now, in conversation, considered as to its tendencies and capacities, there sleeps an intermitting spring of such sudden revelation, showing much of the same general character; a power putting on a character essentially differing from the character worn by the power of books.

If, then, in the colloquial commerce of thought, there lurked

a power not shared by other modes of that great commerce, a power separate and *sui generis*, next it was apparent that a great art must exist somewhere, applicable to this power; not in the Pyramids, or in the tombs of Thebes, but in the unwrought quarries of men's minds, so many and so dark. There was an art missing. If an art, then an artist missing. If the art (as we say of foreign mails) were "due," then the artist was "due." How happened it that this great man never made his appearance? But perhaps he had. Many people think Dr. Johnson the exemplar of conversational power. I think otherwise, for reasons which I shall soon explain, and far sooner I should look for such an exemplar in Burke. But neither Johnson nor Burke, however they might rank as powers, was the artist that I demanded. Burke valued not at all the reputation of a great performer in conversation; he scarcely contemplated the skill as having a real existence; and a man will never be an artist who does not value his art, or even recognize it as an object distinctly defined. Johnson, again, relied sturdily upon his natural powers for carrying him aggressively through all conversational occasions or difficulties that English society, from its known character and composition, could be supposed likely to bring forward, without caring for any art or system of rules that might give further effect to that power. If a man is strong enough to knock down ninety-nine in a hundred of all antagonists, in spite of any advantages as to pugilistic science which they may possess over himself, he is not likely to care for the improbable case of a hundredth man appearing with strength equal to his own, superadded to the utmost excess of that artifical skill which is wanting in himself. Against such a contingency it is not worth while going to the cost of a regular pugilistic training. Half a century might not bring up a case of actual call for its application. Or, if it did, for a single extra case of that nature, there would always be a resource in the extra (and, strictly speaking, foul) arts of kicking, scratching, pinching, and tearing hair.

The conversational powers of Johnson were narrow in compass, however strong within their own essential limits. As a *conditio sine quâ non*, he did not absolutely demand a personal contradictor by way of "stoker" to supply fuel and keep up his steam, but he demanded at least a subject teeming

with elements of known contradictory opinion, whether linked to partisanship or not. His views of all things tended to negation, never to the positive and the creative. Hence may be explained a fact, which cannot have escaped any keen observer of those huge Johnsonian *memorabilia* which we possess, namely, that the gyration of his flight upon any one question that ever came before him was so exceedingly brief. There was no process, no evolution, no movements of self-conflict or preparation; a word, a distinction, a pointed antithesis, and, above all, a new abstraction of the logic involved in some popular fallacy, or doubt, or prejudice, or problem, formed the utmost of his efforts. He dissipated some casual perplexity that had gathered in the eddies of conversation, but he contributed nothing to any weightier interest; he unchoked a strangulated sewer in some blind alley, but what river is there that felt his cleansing power? There is no man that can cite any single error which Dr. Johnson unmasked, or any important truth which he expanded. Nor is this extraordinary. Dr. Johnson had not within himself the fountain of such power, having not a brooding or naturally philosophic intellect. Philosophy in any acquired sense he had none. How else could it have happened that upon David Hartley, upon David Hume, upon Voltaire, upon Rousseau, the true or the false philosophy of his own day, beyond a personal sneer, founded upon some popular slander, he had nothing to say and said nothing. A new world was moulding itself in Dr. Johnson's meridian hours, new generations were ascending, and "other palms were won." Yet of all this the doctor suspected nothing. Countrymen and contemporaries of the doctor's, brilliant men, but (as many think) trifling men, such as Horace Walpole and Lord Chesterfield, already in the middle of that eighteenth century, could read the signs of the great changes advancing, already started in horror from the portents which rose before them in Paris, like the procession of regal phantoms before Macbeth, and have left in their letters records undeniable (such as now read like Cassandra prophecies) that already they had noticed tremors in the ground below their feet, and sounds in the air, running before the great convulsions under which Europe was destined to rock, full thirty years later. Many instances, dur-

ing the last war, showed us that in the frivolous dandy might often lurk the most fiery and accomplished of *aides-de-camp;* and these cases show that men, in whom the world sees only elegant *roués,* sometimes from carelessness, sometimes from want of opening for display, conceal qualities of penetrating sagacity, and a learned spirit of observation, such as may be looked for vainly in persons of more solemn and academic pretension. But there was a greater defect in Dr. Johnson, for purposes of conversation, than merely want of eye for the social phenomena rising around him. He had no eye for such phenomena, because he had a somnolent want of interest in them; and why? because he had little interest in man. Having no sympathy with human nature in its struggles, or faith in the progress of man, he could not be supposed to regard with much interest any forerunning symptoms of changes that to him were themselves indifferent. And the reason that he felt thus careless was the desponding taint in his blood. It is good to be of a melancholic temperament, as all the ancient physiologists held, but only if the melancholy is balanced by fiery aspiring qualities, not when it gravitates essentially to the earth. Hence the drooping, desponding character, and the monotony of the estimate which Dr. Johnson applied to life. We were all, in his view, miserable, scrofulous wretches; the strumous diathesis was developed in our flesh, or soon would be; and, but for his piety, which was the best indication of some greatness latent within him, he would have suggested to all mankind a nobler use for garters than any which regarded knees. In fact, I believe that, but for his piety, he would not only have counselled hanging in general, but hanged himself in particular. Now, this gloomy temperament, not as an occasional but as a permanent state, is fatal to the power of brilliant conversation, in so far as that power rests upon raising a continual succession of topics, and not merely of using with lifeless talent the topics offered by others. Man is the central interest about which revolve all the fleeting phenomena of life; these secondary interests demand the first; and with the little knowledge about them, which must follow from little care about them, there can be no salient fountain of conversational themes. *Pectus—id est quod disertum facit.* From the heart, from an interest of love or hatred,

of hope or care, springs all permanent eloquence; and the elastic spring of conversation is gone if the talker is a mere showy man of talent, pulling at an oar which he detests.

What an index might be drawn up of subjects interesting to human nature, and suggested by the events of the Johnsonian period, upon which the doctor ought to have talked, and must have talked if his interest in man had been catholic, but on which the doctor is not recorded to have uttered one word! Visiting Paris once in his life, he applied himself diligently to the measuring—of what? Of gilt mouldings and diapered panels! Yet books, it will be said, suggest topics as well as life, and the moving sceneries of life. And surely Dr. Johnson had this fund to draw upon? No; for, though he had read much in a desultory way, he had studied nothing;[1] and, without that sort of systematic reading, it is but a rare chance that books can be brought to bear effectually, and yet indirectly, upon conversation; whilst to make them directly and formally the subjects of discussion, presupposes either a learned audience or, if the audience is not so, much pedantry and much arrogance in the talker.

[1] "Had studied nothing."—It may be doubted whether Dr. Johnson understood any one thing thoroughly, except Latin; not that he understood even that with the elaborate and circumstantial accuracy required for the editing critically of a Latin classic. But if he had less than that, he also had more; he possessed that language in a way that no extent of mere critical knowledge could confer. He wrote it genially, not as one translating into it painfully from English, but as one using it for his original organ of thinking. And in Latin verse he expressed himself at times with the energy and freedom of a Roman. With Greek his acquaintance was far more slender.

CONVERSATION

(*Second Essay*)

The flight of our human hours, not really more rapid at any one moment than another, yet oftentimes to our feelings seems more rapid, and this flight startles us like guilty things with a more affecting sense of its rapidity, when a distant church clock strikes in the night-time; or when, upon some solemn summer evening, the sun's disk, after settling for a minute with farewell horizontal rays, suddenly drops out of sight. The record of our loss in such a case seems to us the first intimation of its possibility; as if we could not be made sensible that the hours were perishable until it is announced to us that already they have perished. We feel a perplexity of distress when that which seems to us the cruelest of injuries, a robbery committed upon our dearest possession by the conspiracy of the world outside, seems also as in part a robbery sanctioned by our own collusion. The world, and the customs of the world, never cease to levy taxes upon our time; that is true, and so far the blame is not ours; but the particular *degree* in which we suffer by this robbery depends much upon the weakness with which we ourselves becomes parties to the wrong, or the energy with which we resist it. Resisting or not, however, we are doomed to suffer a bitter pang as often as the irrecoverable flight of our time is brought home with keenness to our hearts. The spectacle of a lady floating over the sea in a boat, and waking suddenly from sleep to find her magnificent ropes of pearl-necklace by some accident detached at one end from its fastenings, the loose string hanging down into the water, and pearl after pearl slipping off forever into the abyss, brings before us the sadness of the case. That particular pearl, which at the very moment is rolling off into the unsearchable deeps, carries its own separate reproach to the lady's heart. But it is more

deeply reproachful as the representative of so many others, uncounted pearls, that have already been swallowed up irrecoverably while she was yet sleeping, and of many besides that must follow before any remedy can be applied to what we may call this jewelly hemorrhage. A constant hemorrhage of the same kind is wasting our jewelly hours. A day has perished from our brief calendar of days, and that we could endure; but this day is no more than the reiteration of many other days, days counted by thousands, that have perished to the same extent and by the same unhappy means—namely, the evil usages of the world made effectual and ratified by our own *lacheté*. Bitter is the upbraiding which we seem to hear from a secret monitor: "My friend, you make very free with your days; pray, how many do you expect to have? What is your rental, as regards the total harvest of days which this life is likely to yield?" Let us consider. Threescore years and ten produce a total sum of 25,550 days; to say nothing of some seventeen or eighteen more that will be payable to you as a *bonus* on account of leap-years. Now, out of this total, one-third must be deducted at a blow for a single item—namely, sleep. Next, on account of illness, of recreation, and the serious occupations spread over the surface of life, it will be little enough to deduct another third. Recollect also that twenty years will have gone from the earlier end of your life (namely, above seven thousand days) before you can have attained any skill or system, or any definite purpose, in the distribution of your time. Lastly, for that single item, which, among the Roman armies, was indicated by the technical phrase "*corpus curare*," tendance on the animal necessities—namely, eating, drinking, washing, bathing, and exercise—deduct the smallest allowance consistent with propriety, and, upon summing up all these appropriations, you will not find so much as four thousand days left disposable for direct intellectual culture. Four thousand, or forty hundreds, will be a hundred forties; that is, according to the lax Hebrew method of indicating six weeks by the phrase of "forty days," you will have a hundred bills or drafts on Father Time, value six weeks each, as the whole period available for intellectual labor. A solid block of about eleven and a half continuous years is all that a long life will furnish for the development of what is most august in man's nature. After that, the night comes when no man

can work; brain and arm will be alike unserviceable; or, if the life should be unusually extended, the vital powers will be drooping as regards all motions in advance.

Limited thus severely in his direct approaches to knowledge, and in his approaches to that which is a thousand times more important than knowledge, namely, the conduct and discipline of the knowing faculty, the more clamorous is the necessity that a wise man should turn to account any *indirect* and supplementary means towards the same ends; and amongst these means a chief one by right and potentially is *conversation.* Even the primary means, books, study, and meditation, through errors from without and errors from within, are not that which they might be made. Too constantly, when reviewing his own efforts for improvement, a man has reason to say (indignantly, as one injured by others; penitentially, as contributing to this injury himself): "Much of my studies have been thrown away; many books which were useless, or worse than useless, I have read; many books which ought to have been read, I have left unread; such is the sad necessity under the absence of all preconceived plan; and the proper road is first ascertained when the journey is drawing to its close." In a wilderness so vast as that of books, to go astray often and widely is pardonable, because it is inevitable; and in proportion as the errors on this primary field of study have been great, it is important to have reaped some compensatory benefits on the secondary field of conversation. Books teach by one machinery, conversation by another; and, if these resources were trained into correspondence to their own separate ideals, they might become reciprocally the complements of each other. The false selection of books, for instance, might often be rectified at once by the frank collation of experiences which takes place in miscellaneous colloquial intercourse. But other and greater advantages belong to conversation for the effectual promotion of intellectual culture. Social discussion supplies the natural integration for the deficiencies of private and sequestered study. Simply to rehearse, simply to express in words amongst familiar friends, one's own intellectual perplexities, is oftentimes to clear them up. It is well known that the best means of learning is by teaching; the effort that is made for others is made eventually for ourselves; and the readiest method of illuminating obscure

conceptions, or maturing such as are crude, lies in an earnest effort to make them apprehensible by others. Even this is but one among the functions filled by conversation. Each separate individual in a company is likely to see any problem or idea under some difference of angle. Each may have some difference of views to contribute, derived either from a different course of reading, or a different tenor of reflection, or perhaps a different train of experience. The advantages of colloquial discussion are not only often commensurate in degree to those of study, but they recommend themselves also as being different in kind; they are special and *sui generis*. It must, therefore, be important that so great an organ of intellectual development should not be neutralized by mismanagement, as generally it is, or neglected through insensibility to its latent capacities. The importance of the subject should be measured by its relation to the interests of the intellect; and on this principle we do not scruple to think that, in reviewing our own experience of the causes most commonly at war with the free movement of conversation as it ought to be, we are in effect contributing hints for a new chapter in any future "Essay on the Improvement of the Mind." Watts's book under that title is really of little practical use, nor would it ever have been thought so had it not been patronized, in a spirit of partisanship, by a particular section of religious dissenters. Wherever that happens, the fortune of a book is made; for the sectarian impulse creates a sensible current in favor of the book; and the general or neutral reader yields passively to the motion of the current, without knowing or caring to know whence it is derived.

Our remarks must of necessity be cursory here, so that they will not need or permit much preparation; but one distinction, which is likely to strike on some minds, as to the two different purposes of conversation, ought to be noticed, since otherwise it will seem doubtful whether we have not confounded them; or, secondly, if we have not confounded them, which of the two it is that our remarks contemplate. In speaking above of conversation, we have fixed our view on those uses of conversation which are ministerial to intellectual culture; but, in relation to the majority of men, conversation is far less valuable as an organ of intellectual culture than of social enjoyment. For one man interested in conversation as a means of advancing his

studies, there are fifty men whose interest in conversation points exclusively to convivial pleasure. This, as being a more extensive function of conversation, is so far the more dignified function; whilst, on the other hand, such a purpose as direct mental improvement seems by its superior gravity to challenge the higher rank. Yet, in fact, even here the more general purpose of conversation takes precedency; for, when dedicated to the objects of festal delight, conversation rises by its tendency to the rank of a fine art. It is true that not one man in a million rises to any distinction in this art; nor, whatever France may conceit of herself, has any one nation, amongst other nations, a real precedency in this art. The artists are rare indeed; but still the art, as distinguished from the artist, may, by its difficulties, by the quality of its graces, and by the range of its possible brilliances, take rank as a fine art; or, at all events, according to its powers of execution, it tends to that rank; whereas the best order of conversation that is simply ministerial to a purpose of use, cannot pretend to a higher name than that of a mechanic art. But these distinctions, though they would form the grounds of a separate treatment in a regular treatise on conversation, may be practically neglected on this occasion, because the hints offered, by the generality of the terms in which they express themselves, may be applied indifferently to either class of conversation. The main diseases, indeed, which obstruct the healthy movement of conversation, recur everywhere; and alike, whether the object be pleasure or profit in the free interchange of thought, almost universally that free interchange is obstructed in the very same way, by the very same defect of any controlling principle for sustaining the general rights and interests of the company, and by the same vices of self-indulgent indolence, or of callous selfishness, or of insolent vanity, in the individual talkers.

Let us fall back on the recollections of our own experience. In the course of our life we have heard much of what was reputed to be the select conversation of the day, and we have heard many of those who figured at the moment as effective talkers; yet in mere sincerity and without a vestige of misanthropic retrospect, we must say, that never once has it happened to us to come away from any display of that nature without intense disappointment; and it always appeared to us that this

failure (which soon ceased to be a disappointment) was inevitable by a necessity of the case. For here lay the stress of the difficulty: almost all depends, in most trials of skill, upon the parity of those who are matched against each other. An ignorant person supposes that to an able disputant it must be an advantage to have a feeble opponent; whereas, on the contrary, it is ruin to him; for he cannot display his own powers but through something of a corresponding power in the resistance of his antagonist. A brilliant fencer is lost and confounded in playing with a novice; and the same thing takes place in playing at ball, or battledore, or in dancing, where a powerless partner does not enable you to shine the more, but reduces you to mere helplessness, and takes the wind altogether out of your sails. Now, if by some rare good luck the great talker—the protagonist—of the evening has been provided with a commensurate second, it is just possible that something like a brilliant " passage of arms " may be the result, though much, even in that case, will depend on the chances of the moment for furnishing a fortunate theme; and even then, amongst the superior part of the company, a feeling of deep vulgarity and of mountebank display is inseparable from such an ostentatious duel of wit. On the other hand, supposing your great talker to be received like any other visitor, and turned loose upon the company, then he must do one of two things: either he will talk upon *outré* subjects specially tabooed to his own private use, in which case the great man has the air of a quack-doctor addressing a mob from a street stage; or else he will talk like ordinary people upon popular topics, in which case the company, out of natural politeness, that they may not seem to be staring at him as a lion, will hasten to meet him in the same style; the conversation will become general; the great man will seem reasonable and well-bred; but, at the same time, we grieve to say it, the great man will have been extinguished by being drawn off from his exclusive ground. The dilemma, in short, in this: if the great talker attempts the plan of showing off by firing cannon-shot when everybody else is contented with musketry, then undoubtedly he produces an impression, but at the expense of insulating himself from the sympathies of the company, and standing aloof as a sort of monster hired to play tricks of funambulism for the night. Yet again, if he contents

himself with a musket like other people, then for us, from whom he modestly hides his talent under a bushel, in what respect is he different from the man who has no such talent?

> "If she be not fair to me,
> What care I how fair she be?"

The reader, therefore, may take it upon the *a priori* logic of this dilemma, or upon the evidence of our own experience, that all reputation for brilliant talking is a visionary thing, and rests upon a sheer impossibility—namely, upon such a histrionic performance in a state of insulation from the rest of the company as could not be effected, even for a single time, without a rare and difficult collusion, and could not, even for that single time, be endurable to a man of delicate and honorable sensibilities.

Yet surely Coleridge had such a reputation, and without needing any collusion at all; for Coleridge, unless he could have all the talk, would have none. But then this was not conversation; it was not *colloquium*, or talking with the company, but *alloquium*, or talking to the company. As Madame de Staël observed, Coleridge talked, and could talk, only by monologue. Such a mode of systematic trespass upon the conversational rights of a whole party, gathered together under pretence of amusement, is fatal to every purpose of social intercourse, whether that purpose be connected with direct use and the service of the intellect, or with the general graces and amenities of life. The result is the same, under whatever impulse such an outrage is practised; but the impulse is not always the same; it varies; and so far the criminal intention varies. In some people this gross excess takes its rise in pure arrogance. They are fully aware of their own intrusion upon the general privileges of the company; they are aware of the temper in which it is likely to be received; but they persist wilfully in the wrong, as a sort of homage levied compulsorily upon those who may wish to resist it but hardly can do so without a violent interruption, wearing the same shape of indecorum as that which they resent. In most people, however, it is not arrogance which prompts this capital offence against social rights, but a blind selfishness, yielding passively to its own instincts, without being distinctly aware of the degree in which this self-indulgence

trespasses on the rights of others. We see the same temper illustrated at times in travelling; a brutal person, as we are disposed at first to pronounce him, but more frequently one who yields unconsciously to a lethargy of selfishness, plants himself at the public fireplace, so as to exclude his fellow-travellers from all but a fraction of the warmth. Yet he does not do this in a spirit of wilful aggression upon others; he has but a glimmering suspicion of the odious shape which his own act assumes to others, for the luxurious torpor of self-indulgence has extended its mists to the energy and clearness of his perceptions. Meantime, Coleridge's habit of soliloquizing through a whole evening of four or five hours had its origin neither in arrogance nor in absolute selfishness. The fact was that he could not talk unless he were uninterrupted, and unless he were able to count upon this concession from the company. It was a silent contract between him and his hearers, that nobody should speak but himself. If any man objected to this arrangement, why did he come? For the custom of the place, the *lex loci*, being notorious, by coming at all he was understood to profess his allegiance to the autocrat who presided. It was not, therefore, by an insolent usurpation that Coleridge persisted in monology through his whole life, but in virtue of a concession from the kindness and respect of his friends. You could not be angry with him for using his privilege, for it was a privilege confessed by others, and a privilege which he was ready to resign as soon as any man demurred to it. But though reconciled to it by these considerations, and by the ability with which he used it, you could not but feel that it worked ill for all parties. Himself it tempted oftentimes into pure garrulity of egotism, and the listeners it reduced to a state of debilitated sympathy or of absolute torpor. Prevented by the custom from putting questions, from proposing doubts, from asking for explanations, reacting by no mode of mental activity, and condemned also to the mental distress of hearing opinions or doctrines stream past them by flights which they must not arrest for a moment, so as even to take a note of them, and which yet they could not often understand, or, seeming to understand, could not always approve, the audience sank at times into a listless condition of inanimate vacuity. To be acted upon forever, but never to react, is fatal to the very powers

by which sympathy must grow, or by which intelligent admiration can be evoked. For his own sake, it was Coleridge's interest to have forced his hearers into the active commerce of question and answer, of objection and demur. Not otherwise was it possible that even the attention could be kept from drooping, or the coherency and dependency of the arguments be forced into light.

The French rarely make a mistake of this nature. The graceful levity of the nation could not easily err in this direction, nor tolerate such deliration in the greatest of men. Not the gay temperament only of the French people, but the particular qualities of the French language, which (however poor for the higher purposes of passion) is rich beyond all others for purposes of social intercourse, prompt them to rapid and vivacious exchange of thought. Tediousness, therefore, above all other vices, finds no countenance or indulgence amongst the French, excepting always in two memorable cases, namely: first, the case of tragic dialogue on the stage, which is privileged to be tedious by usage and tradition; and, secondly, the case (authorized by the best usages in living society) of narrators, or *raconteurs*. This is a shocking anomaly in the code of French good taste as applied to conversation. Of all the bores whom man in his folly hesitates to hang, and heaven in its mysterious wisdom suffers to propagate their species, the most insufferable is the teller of " good stories "—a nuisance that should be put down by cudgelling, by submersion in horse-ponds, or any mode of abatement, as summarily as men would combine to suffocate a vampire or a mad-dog. This case excepted, however, the French have the keenest possible sense of all that is odious and all that is ludicrous in prosing, and universally have a horror of *des longueurs*. It is not strange, therefore, that Madame de Staël noticed little as extraordinary in Coleridge beyond this one capital monstrosity of unlimited soliloquy, that being a peculiarity which she never could have witnessed in France; and, considering the burnish of her French tastes in all that concerned colloquial characteristics, it is creditable to her forbearance that she noticed even this rather as a memorable fact than as the inhuman fault which it was. On the other hand, Coleridge was not so forbearing as regarded the brilliant French lady. He spoke of her to ourselves as a very frivolous

person, and in short summary terms that disdained to linger upon a subject so inconsiderable. It is remarkable that Goethe and Schiller both conversed with Madame de Staël, like Coleridge, and both spoke of her afterward in the same disparaging terms as Coleridge. But it is equally remarkable that Baron William Humboldt, who was personally acquainted with all the four parties—Madame de Staël, Goethe, Schiller, and Coleridge—gave it as his opinion (in letters subsequently published) that the lady had been calumniated through a very ignoble cause—namely, mere ignorance of the French language, or, at least, non-familiarity with the fluencies of oral French. Neither Goethe nor Schiller, though well acquainted with written French, had any command of it for purposes of rapid conversation; and Humboldt supposes that mere spite at the trouble which they found in limping after the lady so as to catch one thought that she uttered, had been the true cause of their unfavorable sentence upon her. Not malice aforethought, so much as vindictive fury for the sufferings they had endured, accounted for their severity in the opinion of the diplomatic baron. He did not extend the same explanation to Coleridge's case, because, though even then in habits of intercourse with Coleridge, he had not heard of his interview with the lady, or of the results from that interview; else what was true of the two German wits was true *a fortiori* of Coleridge; the Germans at least read French and talked it slowly, and occasionally understood it when talked by others. But Coleridge did none of these things. We are all of us well aware that Madame de Staël was not a trifler; nay, that she gave utterance at times to truths as worthy to be held oracular as any that were uttered by the three inspired wits—all philosophers, and bound to truth—but all poets, and privileged to be wayward. This we may collect from these anecdotes, that people accustomed to colloquial despotism, and who wield a sceptre within a circle of their own, are no longer capable of impartial judgments, and do not accommodate themselves with patience, or even with justice, to the pretensions of rivals; and were it only for this result of conversational tyranny, it calls clamorously for extinction by some combined action upon the part of society.

Is such a combination on the part of society possible as a sustained effort? We imagine that it is in these times, and will

be more so in the times which are coming. Formerly, the social meetings of men and women, except only in capital cities, were few; and even in such cities the infusion of female influence was not broad and powerful enough for the correction of those great aberrations from just ideals which disfigured social intercourse. But great changes are proceeding; were it only by the vast revolution in our means of intercourse, laying open every village to the contagion of social temptation, the world of western Europe is tending more and more to a mode of living in public. Under such a law of life, conversation becomes a vital interest of every hour, that can no more suffer interruption from individual caprice or arrogance than the animal process of respiration from transient disturbances of health. Once, when travelling was rare, there was no fixed law for the usages of public rooms in inns or coffee-houses; the courtesy of individuals was the tenure by which men held their rights. If a morose person detained the newspaper for hours, there was no remedy. At present, according to the circumstances of the case, there are strict regulations, which secure to each individual his own share of the common rights.

A corresponding change will gradually take place in the usages which regulate conversation. It will come to be considered an infringement of the general rights for any man to detain the conversation, or arrest its movement, for more than a short space of time, which gradually will be more and more defined. This one curtailment of arrogant pretensions will lead to others. Egotism will no longer freeze the openings to intellectual discussions; and conversation will then become, what it never has been before, a powerful ally of education and generally of self-culture. The main diseases that besiege conversation at present are—1st. The want of timing. Those who are not recalled, by a sense of courtesy and equity, to the continual remembrance that, in appropriating too large a share of the conversation, they are committing a fraud upon their companions, are beyond all control of monitory hints or of reproof, which does not take a direct and open shape of personal remonstrance; but this, where the purpose of the assembly is festive and convivial, bears too harsh an expression for most people's feelings. That objection, however, would not apply to any mode of admonition that was universally established. A pub-

lic memento carries with it no personality. For instance, in the Roman law-courts, no advocate complained of the *clepsydra*, or water timepiece, which regulated the duration of his pleadings. Now, such a contrivance would not be impracticable at an after-dinner talk. To invert the *clepsydra* when all the water had run out, would be an act open to any one of the guests, and liable to no misconstruction, when this check was generally applied, and understood to be a simple expression of public defence, not of private rudeness or personality. The *clepsydra* ought to be filled with some brilliantly colored fluid to be placed in the centre of the table, and with the capacity, at the very most, of the little minute glasses used for regulating the boiling of eggs. It would obviously be insupportably tedious to turn the glass every two or three minutes; but to do so occasionally would avail as a sufficient memento to the company. 2d. Conversation suffers from the want of some discretional power lodged in an individual for controlling its movements. Very often it sinks into insipidity through mere accident. Some trifle has turned its current upon ground where few of the company have anything to say—the commerce of thought languishes; and the consciousness that it is languishing about a narrow circle, "*unde pedem proferre pudor vetat,*" operates for the general refrigeration of the company. Now the ancient Greeks had an officer appointed over every convivial meeting, whose functions applied to all cases of doubt or interruption that could threaten the genial harmony of the company. We also have such officers, presidents, vice-presidents, etc.; and we need only to extend their powers, so that they may exercise over the movement of the conversation the beneficial influence of the Athenian *symposiarch.* At present the evil is, that conversation has no authorized originator; it is servile to the accidents of the moment; and generally these accidents are merely verbal. Some word or some name is dropped casually in the course of an illustration; and that is allowed to suggest a topic, though neither interesting to the majority of the persons present, nor leading naturally into other collateral topics that are more so. Now, in such cases it will be the business of the *symposiarch* to restore the interest of the conversation, and to rekindle its animation, by recalling it from any tracks of dulness or sterility into which it may have rambled. The natural excursiveness of

colloquial intercourse, its tendency to advance by subtle links of association, is one of its advantages; but mere vagrancy from passive acquiescence in the direction given to it by chance or by any verbal accident, is amongst its worst diseases. The business of the *symposiarch* will be, to watch these morbid tendencies, which are not the deviations of graceful freedom, but the distortions of imbecility and collapse. His business it will also be to derive occasions of discussion bearing a general and permanent interest from the fleeting events of the casual disputes of the day. His business again it will be to bring back a subject that has been imperfectly discussed, and has yielded but half of the interest which it promises, under the interruption of any accident which may have carried the thoughts of the party into less attractive channels. Lastly, it should be an express office of education to form a particular style, cleansed from verbiage, from elaborate parenthesis, and from circumlocution, as the only style fitted for a purpose which is one of pure enjoyment, and where every moment used by the speaker is deducted from a public stock.

Many other suggestions for the improvement of conversation might be brought forward within ampler limits; and especially for that class of conversation which moves by discussion a whole code of regulations might be proposed, that would equally promote the interests of the individual speakers and the public interests of the truth involved in the question discussed. Meantime nobody is more aware than we are that no style of conversation is more essentially vulgar than that which moves by disputation. This is the vice of the young and the inexperienced, but especially of those amongst them who are fresh from academic life. But discussion is not necessarily disputation; and the two orders of conversation—that, on the one hand, which contemplates an interest of knowledge, and of the self-developing intellect; that, on the other hand, which forms one and the widest amongst the gay embellishments of life—will always advance together. Whatever there may remain of illiberal in the first (for, according to the remark of Burke, there is always something illiberal in the severer aspects of study until balanced by the influence of social amenities), will correct itself, or will tend to correct itself, by the model held up in the second; and thus the great organ of social intercourse, by means of

speech, which hitherto has done little for man, except through the channel of its ministrations to the direct business of daily necessities, will at length rise into a rivalship with books, and become fixed amongst the alliances of intellectual progress, not less than amongst the ornamental accomplishments of convivial life.

A DEFENCE OF POETRY

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BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

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1792—1822

Percy Bysshe Shelley was of an ancient and opulent family, the eldest son of Sir Timothy Shelley, and was born at Field Place, near Horsham, in Sussex, August 4, 1792. At Eton his sensitive mind was shocked by the sight of boyish tyranny, and he went to Oxford full of abhorrence for the cruelty and bigotry which he fancied pervaded all the relations of civilized life. A marriage he contracted with a beautiful girl, his inferior in rank, caused him to be renounced by his family. This runaway match was an unhappy one, and the young enthusiast resided, in great poverty, at various places in the north of England and in Wales, ardently devoting himself to metaphysical study and to the composition of his first wild but beautiful poems. He separated from his wife, who afterwards terminated her existence in a melancholy manner by suicide.

Having induced his family to make him a considerable annual allowance, his life was from thenceforth relieved from pecuniary difficulties. The delicate state of his health rendered it advisable that he should leave England for a warmer climate, and the remainder of his life was passed abroad, with only one short interruption. In Switzerland he became acquainted with Byron. He afterwards migrated to Italy, where he kept up an intimate companionship with Byron, still continuing to pour forth his strange and enchanting poetry in indefatigable profusion. He resided principally at Rome, and produced there many of his finest works. His death was early and tragic. Returning in a small yacht from Leghorn, in company with a friend and a single boatman, his vessel was caught in a squall and went down with all on board in the Gulf of Spezzia. Thus perished this great poet, at the age of thirty. His body was cast up on the coast some days after, and burned after the manner of the ancients by Byron and Leigh Hunt. His ashes were interred in the beautiful cemetery near the tomb of Cæcilia Metella at Rome.

A complete edition of Shelley's poetical works was published in four volumes in 1839, and in 1840 appeared two volumes of his prose writings entitled "Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments." The literary setting of Shelley's prose writings is so perfect and delightful that, if they had no other interest, they could not fail to be admired for their artistic quality, and take high rank in point of style. "The Defence of Poetry" is the best known of his essays. It is imbued throughout with a spirit of passionate belief in the poet's transcendent functions.

A DEFENCE OF POETRY

ACCORDING to one mode of regarding those two classes of mental action, which are called reason and imagination, the former may be considered as mind contemplating the relations borne by one thought to another, however produced, and the latter, as mind acting upon those thoughts so as to color them with its own light, and composing from them, as from elements, other thoughts, each containing within itself the principle of its own integrity. The one is the τὸ ποιειν, or the principle of synthesis, and has for its objects those forms which are common to universal nature and existence itself; the other is the τὸ λογιζειν, or principle of analysis, and its action regards the relations of things simply as relations; considering thoughts, not in their integral unity, but as the algebraical representations which conduct to certain general results. Reason is the enumeration of qualities already known; imagination is the perception of the value of those qualities, both separately and as a whole. Reason respects the differences, and imagination the similitudes of things. Reason is to imagination as the instrument to the agent, as the body to the spirit, as the shadow to the substance.

Poetry, in a general sense, may be defined to be "the expression of the imagination": and poetry is connate with the origin of man. Man is an instrument over which a series of external and internal impressions are driven, like the alternations of an ever-changing wind over an Æolian lyre, which move it by their motion to ever-changing melody. But there is a principle within the human being, and perhaps within all sentient beings, which acts otherwise than in the lyre, and produces not melody alone, but harmony, by an internal adjustment of the sounds or motions thus excited to the impressions which excite them. It is as if the lyre could accommodate its chords to the motions of that which strikes them, in a determined proportion of sound;

even as the musician can accommodate his voice to the sound of the lyre. A child at play by itself will express its delight by its voice and motions; and every inflexion of tone and every gesture will bear exact relation to a corresponding antitype in the pleasurable impressions which awakened it; it will be the reflected image of that impression; and as the lyre trembles and sounds after the wind has died away, so the child seeks, by prolonging in its voice and motions the duration of the effect, to prolong also a consciousness of the cause. In relation to the objects which delight a child these expressions are what poetry is to higher objects. The savage (for the savage is to ages what the child is to years) expresses the emotions produced in him by surrounding objects in a similar manner; and language and gesture, together with plastic or pictorial imitation, become the image of the combined effect of those objects, and of his apprehension of them. Man in society, with all his passions and his pleasures, next becomes the object of the passions and pleasures of man; an additional class of emotions produces an augmented treasure of expressions; and language, gesture, and the imitative arts, become at once the representation and the medium, the pencil and the picture, the chisel and the statue, the chord and the harmony. The social sympathies, or those laws from which, as from its elements, society results, begin to develop themselves from the moment that two human beings coexist; the future is contained within the present, as the plant within the seed; and equality, diversity, unity, contrast, mutual dependence, become the principles alone capable of affording the motives according to which the will of a social being is determined to action, inasmuch as he is social; and constitute pleasure in sensation, virtue in sentiment, beauty in art, truth in reasoning, and love in the intercourse of kind. Hence men, even in the infancy of society, observe a certain order in their words and actions, distinct from that of the objects and the impressions represented by them, all expression being subject to the laws of that from which it proceeds. But let us dismiss those more general considerations which might involve an inquiry into the principles of society itself, and restrict our view to the manner in which the imagination is expressed upon its forms.

In the youth of the world, men dance and sing and imitate

natural objects, observing in these actions, as in all others, a certain rhythm or order. And, although all men observe a similar, they observe not the same order, in the motions of the dance, in the melody of the song, in the combinations of language, in the series of their imitations of natural objects. For there is a certain order or rhythm belonging to each of these classes of mimetic representation, from which the hearer and the spectator receive an intenser and purer pleasure than from any other: the sense of an approximation to this order has been called *taste* by modern writers. Every man in the infancy of art observes an order which approximates more or less closely to that from which this highest delight results: but the diversity is not sufficiently marked, as that its gradations should be sensible, except in those instances where the predominance of this faculty of approximation to the beautiful (for so we may be permitted to name the relation between this highest pleasure and its cause) is very great. Those in whom it exists in excess are poets, in the most universal sense of the word; and the pleasure resulting from the manner in which they express the influence of society or nature upon their own minds, communicates itself to others, and gathers a sort of reduplication from that community. Their language is vitally metaphorical; that is, it marks the before unapprehended relations of things and perpetuates their apprehension, until the words which represent them, become, through time, signs for portions or classes of thoughts instead of pictures of integral thoughts; and then if no new poets should arise to create afresh the associations which have been thus disorganized, language will be dead to all the nobler purposes of human intercourse. These similitudes or relations are finely said by Lord Bacon to be "the same footsteps of nature impressed upon the various subjects of the world" [1]—and he considers the faculty which perceives them as the storehouse of axioms common to all knowledge. In the infancy of society every author is necessarily a poet, because language itself is poetry; and to be a poet is to apprehend the true and the beautiful, in a word, the good which exists in the relation, subsisting, first between existence and perception, and secondly between perception and expression. Every original language near to its source is in itself the chaos of a cyclic poem:

[1] "De Augment. Scient.," cap. 1, lib. iii.

the copiousness of lexicography and the distinctions of grammar are the works of a later age, and are merely the catalogue and the form of the creations of poetry.

But poets, or those who imagine and express this indestructible order, are not only the authors of language and of music, of the dance, and architecture, and statuary, and painting: they are the institutors of laws, and the founders of civil society, and the inventors of the arts of life, and the teachers, who draw into a certain propinquity with the beautiful and the true that partial apprehension of the agencies of the invisible world which is called religion. Hence all original religions are allegorical, or susceptible of allegory, and, like Janus, have a double face of false and true. Poets, according to the circumstances of the age and nation in which they appeared, were called, in the earlier epochs of the world, legislators, or prophets: a poet essentially comprises and unites both these characters. For he not only beholds intensely the present as it is, and discovers those laws according to which present things ought to be ordered, but he beholds the future in the present, and his thoughts are the germs of the flower and the fruit of latest time. Not that I assert poets to be prophets in the gross sense of the word, or that they can foretell the form as surely as they foreknow the spirit of events: such is the pretence of superstition, which would make poetry an attribute of prophecy, rather than prophecy an attribute of poetry. A poet participates in the eternal, the infinite, and the one; as far as relates to his conceptions, time and place and number are not. The grammatical forms which express the moods of time, and the difference of persons, and the distinction of place, are convertible with respect to the highest poetry without injuring it as poetry; and the choruses of Æschylus, and the book of Job, and Dante's " Paradise " would afford, more than any other writings, examples of this fact, if the limits of this essay did not forbid citation. The creations of sculpture, painting, and music are illustrations still more decisive.

Language, color, form, and religious and civil habits of action, are all the instruments and materials of poetry; they may be called poetry by that figure of speech which considers the effect as a synonym of the cause. But poetry in a more restricted sense expresses those arrangements of language, and

especially metrical language, which are created by that imperial faculty, whose throne is curtained within the invisible nature of man. And this springs from the nature itself of language, which is a more direct representation of the actions and passions of our internal being, and is susceptible of more various and delicate combinations, than color, form, or motion, and is more plastic and obedient to the control of that faculty of which it is the creation. For language is arbitrarily produced by the imagination, and has relation to thoughts alone; but all other materials, instruments, and conditions of art have relations among each other, which limit and interpose between conception and expression. The former is as a mirror which reflects, the latter as a cloud which enfeebles, the light of which both are mediums of communication. Hence the fame of sculptors, painters, and musicians, although the intrinsic powers of the great masters of these arts may yield in no degree to that of those who have employed language as the hieroglyphic of their thoughts, has never equalled that of poets in the restricted sense of the term; as two performers of equal skill will produce unequal effects from a guitar and a harp. The fame of legislators and founders of religions, so long as their institutions last, alone seems to exceed that of poets in the restricted sense; but it can scarcely be a question, whether, if we deduct the celebrity which their flattery of the gross opinions of the vulgar usually conciliates, together with that which belonged to them in their higher character of poets, any excess will remain.

We have thus circumscribed the word poetry within the limits of that art which is the most familiar and the most perfect expression of the faculty itself. It is necessary, however, to make the circle still narrower, and to determine the distinction between measured and unmeasured language; for the popular division into prose and verse is inadmissible in accurate philosophy.

Sounds as well as thoughts have relation both between each other and towards that which they represent, and a perception of the order of those relations has always been found connected with a perception of the order of the relations of thoughts. Hence the language of poets has ever affected a certain uniform and harmonious recurrence of sound, without which it were not poetry, and which is scarcely less indispensable to the communi-

cation of its influence, than the words themselves, without reference to that peculiar order. Hence the vanity of translation; it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its color and odor, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower—and this is the burden of the curse of Babel.

An observation of the regular mode of the recurrence of harmony in the language of poetical minds, together with its relation to music, produced metre, or a certain system of traditional forms of harmony and language. Yet it is by no means essential that a poet should accommodate his language to this traditional form, so that the harmony, which is its spirit, be observed. The practice is indeed convenient and popular, and to be preferred, especially in such composition as includes much action: but every great poet must inevitably innovate upon the example of his predecessors in the exact structure of his peculiar versification. The distinction between poets and prose writers is a vulgar error. The distinction between philosophers and poets has been anticipated. Plato was essentially a poet—the truth and splendor of his imagery, and the melody of his language, are the most intense that it is possible to conceive. He rejected the measure of the epic, dramatic, and lyrical forms, because he sought to kindle a harmony in thoughts divested of shape and action, and he forebore to invent any regular plan of rhythm which would include, under determinate forms, the varied pauses of his style. Cicero sought to imitate the cadence of his periods, but with little success. Lord Bacon was a poet.[1] His language has a sweet and majestic rhythm, which satisfies the sense, no less than the almost superhuman wisdom of his philosophy satisfies the intellect; it is a strain which distends, and then bursts the circumference of the reader's mind, and pours itself forth together with it into the universal element with which it has perpetual sympathy. All the authors of revolutions in opinion are not only necessarily poets as they are inventors, nor even as their words unveil the permanent analogy of things by images which participate in the life of truth; but as their periods are harmonious and rhythmical, and contain in themselves the elements of verse; being the echo of the eternal

[1] See the "Filum Labyrinthi," and the "Essay on Death" particularly.

music. Nor are those supreme poets, who have employed traditional forms of rhythm on account of the form and action of their subjects, less capable of perceiving and teaching the truth of things, than those who have omitted that form. Shakespeare, Dante, and Milton (to confine ourselves to modern writers) are philosophers of the very loftiest power.

A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth. There is this difference between a story and a poem, that a story is a catalogue of detached facts, which have no other connection than time, place, circumstance, cause and effect; the other is the creation of actions according to the unchangeable forms of human nature, as existing in the mind of the Creator, which is itself the image of all other minds. The one is partial, and applies only to a definite period of time, and a certain combination of events which can never again recur; the other is universal, and contains within itself the germ of a relation to whatever motives or actions have place in the possible varieties of human nature. Time, which destroys the beauty and the use of the story of particular facts, stripped of the poetry which should invest them, augments that of poetry, and forever develops new and wonderful applications of the eternal truth which it contains. Hence epitomes have been called the moths of just history; they eat out the poetry of it. A story of particular facts is as a mirror which obscures and distorts that which should be beautiful: poetry is a mirror which makes beautiful that which is distorted.

The parts of a composition may be poetical, without the composition as a whole being a poem. A single sentence may be considered as a whole, though it may be found in the midst of a series of unassimilated portions; a single word even may be a spark of inextinguishable thought. And thus all the great historians, Herodotus, Plutarch, Livy, were poets; and although the plan of these writers, especially that of Livy, restrained them from developing this faculty in its highest degree, they made copious and ample amends for their subjection, by filling all the interstices of their subjects with living images.

Having determined what is poetry, and who are poets, let us proceed to estimate its effects upon society.

Poetry is ever accompanied with pleasure: all spirits on which it falls open themselves to receive the wisdom which is

mingled with its delight. In the infancy of the world, neither poets themselves nor their auditors are fully aware of the excellence of poetry: for it acts in a divine and unapprehended manner, beyond and above consciousness; and it is reserved for future generations to contemplate and measure the mighty cause and effect in all the strength and splendor of their union. Even in modern times, no living poet ever arrived at the fulness of his fame; the jury which sits in judgment upon a poet, belonging as he does to all time, must be composed of his peers: it must be impannelled by Time from the selectest of the wise of many generations. A poet is a nightingale, who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds; his auditors are as men entranced by the melody of an unseen musician, who feel that they are moved and softened, yet know not whence or why. The poems of Homer and his contemporaries were the delight of infant Greece; they were the elements of that social system which is the column upon which all succeeding civilization has reposed. Homer embodied the ideal perfection of his age in human character; nor can we doubt that those who read his verses were awakened to an ambition of becoming like to Achilles, Hector, and Ulysses: the truth and beauty of friendship, patriotism, and persevering devotion to an object, were unveiled to the depths in these immortal creations: the sentiments of the auditors must have been refined and enlarged by a sympathy with such great and lovely impersonations, until from admiring they imitated, and from imitation they identified themselves with the objects of their admiration. Nor let it be objected that these characters are remote from moral perfection, and that they can by no means be considered as edifying patterns for general imitation. Every epoch, under names more or less specious, has deified its peculiar errors; Revenge is the naked idol of the worship of a semi-barbarous age; and Self-deceit is the veiled image of unknown evil, before which luxury and satiety lie prostrate. But a poet considers the vices of his contemporaries as the temporary dress in which his creations must be arrayed, and which cover without concealing the eternal proportions of their beauty. An epic or dramatic personage is understood to wear them around his soul, as he may the ancient armor or the modern uniform around his body; whilst it is easy to conceive a dress more graceful

than either. The beauty of the internal nature cannot be so far concealed by its accidental vesture, but that the spirit of its form shall communicate itself to the very disguise, and indicate the shape it hides from the manner in which it is worn. A majestic form and graceful motions will express themselves through the most barbarous and tasteless costume. Few poets of the highest class have chosen to exhibit the beauty of their conceptions in its naked truth and splendor; and it is doubtful whether the alloy of costume, habit, etc., be not necessary to temper this planetary music for mortal ears.

The whole objection, however, of the immorality of poetry rests upon a misconception of the manner in which poetry acts to produce the moral improvement of man. Ethical science arranges the elements which poetry has created, and propounds schemes and proposes examples of civil and domestic life: nor is it for want of admirable doctrines that men hate, and despise, and censure, and deceive, and subjugate one another. But poetry acts in another and diviner manner. It awakens and enlarges the mind itself by rendering it the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought. Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world, and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar; it reproduces all that it represents, and the impersonations clothed in its Elysian light stand thenceforward in the minds of those who have once contemplated them, as memorials of that gentle and exalted content which extends itself over all thoughts and actions with which it coexists. The great secret of morals is love; or a going out of our nature, and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own. A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause. Poetry enlarges the circumference of the imagination by replenishing it with thoughts of ever new delight, which have the power of attracting and assimilating to their own nature all other thoughts, and which form new intervals and interstices whose void forever craves fresh food. Poetry strengthens the faculty which is the organ of the moral nature

of man, in the same manner as exercise strengthens a limb. A poet therefore would do ill to embody his own conceptions of right and wrong, which are usually those of his place and time, in his poetical creations, which participate in neither. By this assumption of the inferior office of interpreting the effect, in which perhaps after all he might acquit himself but imperfectly, he would resign a glory in a participation in the cause. There was little danger that Homer, or any of the eternal poets, should have so far misunderstood themselves as to have abdicated this throne of their widest dominion. Those in whom the poetical faculty, though great, is less intense, as Euripides, Lucan, Tasso, Spenser, have frequently affected a moral aim, and the effect of their poetry is diminished in exact proportion to the degree in which they compel us to advert to this purpose.

Homer and the cyclic poets were followed at a certain interval by the dramatic and lyrical poets of Athens, who flourished contemporaneously with all that is most perfect in the kindred expressions of the poetical faculty; architecture, painting, music, the dance, sculpture, philosophy, and, we may add, the forms of civil life. For although the scheme of Athenian society was deformed by many imperfections which the poetry existing in chivalry and Christianity has erased from the habits and institutions of modern Europe; yet never at any other period has so much energy, beauty, and virtue been developed; never was blind strength and stubborn form so disciplined and rendered subject to the will of man, or that will less repugnant to the dictates of the beautiful and the true, as during the century which preceded the death of Socrates. Of no other epoch in the history of our species have we records and fragments stamped so visibly with the image of the divinity in man. But it is poetry alone, in form, in action, or in language, which has rendered this epoch memorable above all others, and the storehouse of examples to everlasting time. For written poetry existed at that epoch simultaneously with the other arts, and it is an idle inquiry to demand which gave and which received the light, which all, as from a common focus, have scattered over the darkest periods of succeeding time. We know no more of cause and effect than a constant conjunction of events: poetry is ever found to coexist with whatever other arts contribute to the happiness and perfection of man. I appeal to what has

already been established to distinguish between the cause and the effect.

It was at the period here adverted to that the drama had its birth; and however a succeeding writer may have equalled or surpassed those few great specimens of the Athenian drama which have been preserved to us, it is indisputable that the art itself never was understood or practised according to the true philosophy of it, as at Athens. For the Athenians employed language, action, music, painting, the dance, and religious institutions, to produce a common effect in the representation of the highest idealisms of passion and of power; each division in the art was made perfect in its kind by artists of the most consummate skill, and was disciplined into a beautiful proportion and unity one towards the other. On the modern stage a few only of the elements capable of expressing the image of the poet's conception are employed at once. We have tragedy without music and dancing; and music and dancing without the highest impersonations of which they are the fit accompaniment, and both without religion and solemnity. Religious institution has indeed been usually banished from the stage. Our system of divesting the actor's face of a mask, on which the many expressions appropriated to his dramatic character might be moulded into one permanent and unchanging expression, is favorable only to a partial and inharmonious effect; it is fit for nothing but a monologue, where all the attention may be directed to some great master of ideal mimicry. The modern practice of blending comedy with tragedy, though liable to great abuse in point of practice, is undoubtedly an extension of the dramatic circle; but the comedy should be as in " King Lear," universal, ideal, and sublime. It is perhaps the intervention of this principle which determines the balance in favor of " King Lear " against the " Œdipus Tyrannus " or the " Agamemnon," or, if you will, the trilogies with which they are connected; unless the intense power of the choral poetry, especially that of the latter, should be considered as restoring the equilibrium. " King Lear," if it can sustain this comparison, may be judged to be the most perfect specimen of the dramatic art existing in the world; in spite of the narrow conditions to which the poet was subjected by the ignorance of the philosophy of the drama which has prevailed in modern Europe. Calderon, in his religious

autos, has attempted to fulfil some of the high conditions of dramatic representation neglected by Shakespeare; such as the establishing a relation between the drama and religion, and the accommodating them to music and dancing; but he omits the observation of conditions still more important, and more is lost than gained by the substitution of the rigidly defined and ever-repeated idealisms of a distorted superstition for the living impersonations of the truth of human passion.

But I digress. The connection of scenic exhibitions with the improvement or corruption of the manners of men has been universally recognized; in other words, the presence or absence of poetry in its most perfect and universal form has been found to be connected with good and evil in conduct or habit. The corruption which has been imputed to the drama as an effect, begins, when the poetry employed in its constitution ends: I appeal to the history of manners whether the periods of the growth of the one and the decline of the other have not corresponded with an exactness equal to any example of moral cause and effect.

The drama at Athens, or wheresoever else it may have approached to its perfection, ever coexisted with the moral and intellectual greatness of the age. The tragedies of the Athenian poets are as mirrors in which the spectator beholds himself, under a thin disguise of circumstance, stripped of all but that ideal perfection and energy which everyone feels to be the internal type of all that he loves, admires, and would become. The imagination is enlarged by a sympathy with pains and passions so mighty, that they distend in their conception the capacity of that by which they are conceived; the good affections are strengthened by pity, indignation, terror, and sorrow; and an exalted calm is prolonged from the satiety of this high exercise of them into the tumult of familiar life: even crime is disarmed of half its horror and all its contagion by being represented as the fatal consequence of the unfathomable agencies of nature; error is thus divested of its wilfulness; men can no longer cherish it as the creation of their choice. In a drama of the highest order there is little food for censure or hatred; it teaches rather self-knowledge and self-respect. Neither the eye nor the mind can see itself, unless reflected upon that which it resembles. The drama, so long as it continues to express

poetry, is as a prismatic and many-sided mirror, which collects the brightest rays of human nature and divides and reproduces them from the simplicity of these elementary forms, and touches them with majesty and beauty, and multiplies all that it reflects, and endows it with the power of propagating its like wherever it may fall.

But in periods of the decay of social life, the drama sympathizes with that decay. Tragedy becomes a cold imitation of the form of the great masterpieces of antiquity, divested of all harmonious accompaniment of the kindred arts; and often the very form misunderstood, or a weak attempt to teach certain doctrines, which the writer considers as moral truths; and which are usually no more than specious flatteries of some gross vice or weakness, with which the author, in common with his auditors, are infected. Hence what has been called the classical and domestic drama. Addison's "Cato" is a specimen of the one; and would it were not superfluous to cite examples of the other! To such purposes poetry cannot be made subservient. Poetry is a sword of lightning, ever unsheathed, which consumes the scabbard that would contain it. And thus we observe that all dramatic writings of this nature are unimaginative in a singular degree; they affect sentiment and passion, which, divested of imagination, are other names for caprice and appetite. The period in our own history of the grossest degradation of the drama is the reign of Charles II, when all forms in which poetry had been accustomed to be expressed became hymns to the triumph of kingly power over liberty and virtue. Milton stood alone illuminating an age unworthy of him. At such periods the calculating principle pervades all the forms of dramatic exhibition, and poetry ceases to be expressed upon them. Comedy loses its ideal universality: wit succeeds to humor; we laugh from self-complacency and triumph, instead of pleasure; malignity, sarcasm, and contempt succeed to sympathetic merriment; we hardly laugh, but we smile. Obscenity, which is ever blasphemy against the divine beauty in life, becomes, from the very veil which it assumes, more active if less disgusting: it is a monster for which the corruption of society forever brings forth new food, which it devours in secret.

The drama being that form under which a greater number of modes of expression of poetry are susceptible of being com-

bined than any other, the connection of poetry and social good is more observable in the drama than in whatever other form. And it is indisputable that the highest perfection of human society has ever corresponded with the highest dramatic excellence; and that the corruption or the extinction of the drama in a nation where it has once flourished is a mark of a corruption of manners, and an extinction of the energies which sustain the soul of social life. But, as Machiavelli says of political institutions, that life may be preserved and renewed, if men should arise capable of bringing back the drama to its principles. And this is true with respect to poetry in its most extended sense: all language, institution, and form require not only to be produced but to be sustained: the office and character of a poet participate in the divine nature as regards providence, no less than as regards creation.

Civil war, the spoils of Asia, and the fatal predominance first of the Macedonian, and then of the Roman arms, were so many symbols of the extinction or suspension of the creative faculty in Greece. The bucolic writers, who found patronage under the lettered tyrants of Sicily and Egypt, were the latest representatives of its most glorious reign. Their poetry is intensely melodious; like the odor of the tuberose, it overcomes and sickens the spirit with excess of sweetness; whilst the poetry of the preceding age was as a meadow-gale of June, which mingles the fragrance of all the flowers of the field, and adds a quickening and harmonizing spirit of its own which endows the sense with a power of sustaining its extreme delight. The bucolic and erotic delicacy in written poetry is correlative with that softness in statuary, music, and the kindred arts, and even in manners and institutions, which distinguished the epoch to which I now refer. Nor is it the poetical faculty itself, or any misapplication of it, to which this want of harmony is to be imputed. An equal sensibility to the influence of the senses and the affections is to be found in the writings of Homer and Sophocles: the former, especially, has clothed sensual and pathetic images with irresistible attractions. Their superiority over these succeeding writers consists in the presence of those thoughts which belong to the inner faculties of our nature, not in the absence of those which are connected with the external: their incomparable perfection consists in a harmony of the union

of all. It is not what the erotic poets have, but what they have not, in which their imperfection consists. It is not inasmuch as they were poets, but inasmuch as they were not poets, that they can be considered with any plausibility as connected with the corruption of their age. Had that corruption availed so as to extinguish in them the sensibility to pleasure, passion, and natural scenery, which is imputed to them as an imperfection, the last triumph of evil would have been achieved. For the end of social corruption is to destroy all sensibility to pleasure; and, therefore, it is corruption. It begins at the imagination and the intellect as at the core, and distributes itself thence as a paralyzing venom, through the affections into the very appetites, until all become a torpid mass in which hardly sense survives. At the approach of such a period, poetry ever addresses itself to those faculties which are the last to be destroyed, and its voice is heard, like the footsteps of Astræa, departing from the world. Poetry ever communicates all the pleasure which men are capable of receiving: it is ever still the light of life; the source of whatever of beautiful or generous or true can have place in an evil time. It will readily be confessed that those among the luxurious citizens of Syracuse and Alexandria, who were delighted with the poems of Theocritus, were less cold, cruel, and sensual than the remnant of their tribe. But corruption must utterly have destroyed the fabric of human society before poetry can ever cease. The sacred links of that chain have never been entirely disjoined, which descending through the minds of many men is attached to those great minds, whence as from a magnet the invisible effluence is sent forth, which at once connects, animates, and sustains the life of all. It is the faculty which contains within itself the seeds at once of its own and of social renovation. And let us not circumscribe the effects of the bucolic and erotic poetry within the limits of the sensibility of those to whom it was addressed. They may have perceived the beauty of those immortal compositions, simply as fragments and isolated portions: those who are more finely organized, or born in a happier age, may recognize them as episodes to that great poem, which all poets, like the co-operating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world.

The same revolutions within a narrower sphere had place in ancient Rome; but the actions and forms of its social life never

seem to have been perfectly saturated with the poetical element. The Romans appear to have considered the Greeks as the selectest treasuries of the selectest forms of manners and of nature, and to have abstained from creating in measured language, sculpture, music, or architecture, anything which might bear a particular relation to their own condition, whilst it should bear a general one to the universal constitution of the world. But we judge from partial evidence, and we judge perhaps partially. Ennius, Varro, Pacuvius, and Accius, all great poets, have been lost. Lucretius is in the highest, and Vergil in a very high sense, a creator. The chosen delicacy of expressions of the latter are as a mist of light which conceal from us the intense and exceeding truth of his conceptions of nature. Livy is instinct with poetry. Yet Horace, Catullus, Ovid, and generally the other great writers of the Vergilian age, saw man and nature in the mirror of Greece. The institutions also, and the religion of Rome, were less poetical that those of Greece, as the shadow is less vivid than the substance. Hence poetry in Rome seemed to follow, rather than accompany, the perfection of political and domestic society. The true poetry of Rome lived in its institutions; for whatever of beautiful, true, and majestic, they contained, could have sprung only from the faculty which creates the order in which they consist. The life of Camillus, the death of Regulus; the expectation of the senators, in their godlike state, of the victorious Gauls; the refusal of the republic to make peace with Hannibal, after the battle of Cannæ, were not the consequences of a refined calculation of the probable personal advantage to result from such a rhythm and order in the shows of life, to those who were at once the poets and the actors of these immortal dramas. The imagination beholding the beauty of this order, created it out of itself according to its own idea; the consequence was empire, and the reward ever-living fame. These things are not the less poetry, *quia carent vate sacro*. They are the episodes of that cyclic poem written by Time upon the memories of men. The Past, like an inspired rhapsodist, fills the theatre of everlasting generations with their harmony.

At length the ancient system of religion and manners had fulfilled the circle of its revolutions. And the world would have fallen into utter anarchy and darkness, but that there were

found poets among the authors of the Christian and chivalric systems of manners and religion, who created forms of opinion and action never before conceived; which, copied into the imaginations of men, became as generals to the bewildered armies of their thoughts. It is foreign to the present purpose to touch upon the evil produced by these systems: except that we protest, on the ground of the principles already established, that no portion of it can be attributed to the poetry they contain.

It is probable that the poetry of Moses, Job, David, Solomon, and Isaiah had produced a great effect upon the mind of Jesus and his disciples. The scattered fragments preserved to us by the biographers of this extraordinary person are all instinct with the most vivid poetry. But his doctrines seem to have been quickly distorted. At a certain period after the prevalence of a system of opinions founded upon those promulgated by him, the three forms into which Plato had distributed the faculties of mind underwent a sort of apotheosis, and became the object of the worship of the civilized world. Here it is to be confessed that "Light seems to thicken," and

> "The crow makes wing to the rocky wood,
> Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,
> And night's black agents to their preys do rouse."

But mark how beautiful an order has sprung from the dust and blood of this fierce chaos! how the world, as from a resurrection, balancing itself on the golden wings of Knowledge and of Hope, has reassumed its yet unwearied flight into the heaven of time. Listen to the music, unheard by outward ears, which is as a ceaseless and invisible wind, nourishing its everlasting course with strength and swiftness.

The poetry in the doctrines of Jesus Christ, and the mythology and institutions of the Celtic conquerors of the Roman Empire, outlived the darkness and the convulsions connected with their growth and victory, and blended themselves in a new fabric of manners and opinion. It is an error to impute the ignorance of the dark ages to the Christian doctrines or the predominance of the Celtic nations. Whatever of evil their agencies may have contained sprang from the extinction of the poetical principle, connected with the progress of despotism and superstition. Men, from causes too intricate to be here

discussed, had become insensible and selfish: their own will had become feeble, and yet they were its slaves, and thence the slaves of the will of others: lust, fear, avarice, cruelty, and fraud, characterized a race amongst whom no one was to be found capable of *creating* in form, language, or institution. The moral anomalies of such a state of society are not justly to be charged upon any class of events immediately connected with them, and those events are most entitled to our approbation which could dissolve it most expeditiously. It is unfortunate for those who cannot distinguish words from thoughts, that many of these anomalies have been incorporated into our popular religion.

It was not until the eleventh century that the effects of the poetry of the Christian and chivalric systems began to manifest themselves. The principle of equality had been discovered and applied by Plato in his " Republic " as the theoretical rule of the mode in which the materials of pleasure and of power produced by the common skill and labor of human beings ought to be distributed among them. The limitations of this rule were asserted by him to be determined only by the sensibility of each, or the utility to result to all. Plato, following the doctrines of Timæus and Pythagoras, taught also a moral and intellectual system of doctrine, comprehending at once the past, the present, and the future condition of man. Jesus Christ divulged the sacred and eternal truths contained in these views to mankind, and Christianity, in its abstract purity, became the exoteric expression of the esoteric doctrines of the poetry and wisdom of antiquity. The incorporation of the Celtic nations with the exhausted population of the south impressed upon it the figure of the poetry existing in their mythology and institutions. The result was a sum of the action and reaction of all the causes included in it; for it may be assumed as a maxim that no nation or religion can supersede any other without incorporating into itself a portion of that which it supersedes. The abolition of personal and domestic slavery, and the emancipation of women from a great part of the degrading restraints of antiquity, were among the consequences of these events.

The abolition of personal slavery is the basis of the highest political hope that it can enter into the mind of man to conceive.

The freedom of women produced the poetry of sexual love. Love became a religion, the idols of whose worship were ever present. It was as if the statues of Apollo and the Muses had been endowed with life and motion, and had walked forth among their worshippers; so that earth became peopled by the inhabitants of a diviner world. The familiar appearance and proceedings of life became wonderful and heavenly, and a paradise was created as out of the wrecks of Eden. And as this creation itself is poetry, so its creators were poets; and language was the instrument of their art: "*Galeotto fù il libro, e chi lo scrisse.*" The Provençal trouveurs, or inventors, preceded Petrarch, whose verses are as spells, which unseal the inmost enchanted fountains of the delight which is in the grief of love. It is impossible to feel them without becoming a portion of that beauty which we contemplate: it were superfluous to explain how the gentleness and the elevation of mind connected with these sacred emotions can render men more amiable, more generous and wise, and lift them out of the dull vapors of the little world of self. Dante understood the secret things of love even more than Petrarch. His "Vita Nuova" is an inexhaustible fountain of purity of sentiment and language: it is the idealized history of that period, and those intervals of his life which were dedicated to love. His apotheosis of Beatrice in Paradise, and the gradations of his own love and her loveliness, by which as by steps he feigns himself to have ascended to the throne of the Supreme Cause, is the most glorious imagination of modern poetry. The acutest critics have justly reversed the judgment of the vulgar, and the order of the great acts of the "Divine Drama," in the measure of the admiration which they accord to the Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. The latter is a perpetual hymn of everlasting love. Love, which found a worthy poet in Plato alone of all the ancients, has been celebrated by a chorus of the greatest writers of the renovated world; and the music has penetrated the caverns of society, and its echoes still drown the dissonance of arms and superstition. At successive intervals, Ariosto, Tasso, Shakespeare, Spenser, Calderon, Rousseau, and the great writers of our own age, have celebrated the dominion of love, planting as it were trophies in the human mind of that sublimest victory over sensuality and force. The true relation borne to each

other by the sexes into which humankind is distributed has become less misunderstood; and if the error which confounded diversity with inequality of the powers of the two sexes has been partially recognized in the opinions and institutions of modern Europe, we owe this great benefit to the worship of which chivalry was the law, and poets the prophets.

The poetry of Dante may be considered as the bridge thrown over the stream of time, which unites the modern and ancient world. The distorted notions of invisible things which Dante and his rival Milton have idealized, are merely the mask and the mantle in which these great poets walk through eternity enveloped and disguised. It is a difficult question to determine how far they were conscious of the distinction which must have subsisted in their minds between their own creeds and that of the people. Dante at least appears to wish to mark the full extent of it by placing Riphæus, whom Vergil calls *justissimus unus*, in Paradise, and observing a most heretical caprice in his distribution of rewards and punishments. And Milton's poem contains within itself a philosophical refutation of that system, of which, by a strange and natural antithesis, it has been a chief popular support. Nothing can exceed the energy and magnificence of the character of Satan as expressed in "Paradise Lost." It is a mistake to suppose that he could ever have been intended for the popular personification of evil. Implacable hate, patient cunning, and a sleepless refinement of device to inflict the extremest anguish on an enemy, these things are evil; and, although venial in a slave, are not to be forgiven in a tyrant; although redeemed by much that ennobles his defeat in one subdued, are marked by all that dishonors his conquest in the victor. Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God, as one who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent in spite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy, not from any mistaken notion of inducing him to repent of a perseverance in enmity, but with the alleged design of exasperating him to deserve new torments. Milton has so far violated the popular creed (if this shall be judged to be a violation) as to have alleged no superiority of moral virtue to his God over his Devil. And this bold neglect of a direct moral

purpose is the most decisive proof of the supremacy of Milton's genius. He mingled as it were the elements of human nature as colors upon a single pallet, and arranged them in the composition of his great picture according to the laws of epic truth; that is, according to the laws of that principle by which a series of actions of the external universe and of intelligent and ethical beings is calculated to excite the sympathy of succeeding generations of mankind. The "Divina Commedia" and "Paradise Lost" have conferred upon modern mythology a systematic form; and when change and time shall have added one more superstition to the mass of those which have arisen and decayed upon the earth, commentators will be learnedly employed in elucidating the religion of ancestral Europe, only not utterly forgotten because it will have been stamped with the eternity of genius.

Homer was the first and Dante the second epic poet: that is, the second poet, the series of whose creations bore a defined and intelligible relation to the knowledge and sentiment and religion of the age in which he lived, and of the ages which followed it, developing itself in correspondence with their development. For Lucretius had limed the wings of his swift spirit in the dregs of the sensible world; and Vergil, with a modesty that ill became his genius, had affected the fame of an imitator, even whilst he created anew all that he copied; and none among the flock of mock-birds, though their notes were sweet, Apollonius Rhodius, Quintus Calaber, Nonnus, Lucan, Statius, or Claudian, have sought even to fulfil a single condition of epic truth. Milton was the third epic poet. For if the title of epic in its highest sense be refused to the "Æneid," still less can it be conceded to the "Orlando Furioso," the "Gerusalemme Liberata," the "Lusiad," or the "Faerie Queene."

Dante and Milton were both deeply penetrated with the ancient religion of the civilized world; and its spirit exists in their poetry probably in the same proportion as its forms survived in the unreformed worship of modern Europe. The one preceded and the other followed the Reformation at almost equal intervals. Dante was the first religious reformer, and Luther surpassed him rather in the rudeness and acrimony, than in the boldness of his censures of papal usurpation. Dante was the first awakener of entranced Europe; he created a lan-

guage, in itself music and persuasion, out of a chaos of inharmonious barbarisms. He was the congregator of those great spirits who presided over the resurrection of learning; the Lucifer of that starry flock which in the thirteenth century shone forth from republican Italy, as from a heaven, into the darkness of the benighted world. His very words are instinct with spirit; each is as a spark, a burning atom of inextinguishable thought; and many yet lie covered in the ashes of their birth, and pregnant with the lightning which has yet found no conductor. All high poetry is infinite; it is as the first acorn, which contained all oaks potentially. Veil after veil may be undrawn, and the inmost naked beauty of the meaning never exposed. A great poem is a fountain forever overflowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and after one person and one age has exhausted all its divine effluence which their peculiar relations enable them to share, another and yet another succeeds, and new relations are ever developed, the source of an unforeseen and an unconceived delight.

The age immediately succeeding to that of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio was characterized by a revival of painting, sculpture, and architecture. Chaucer caught the sacred inspiration, and the superstructure of English literature is based upon the materials of Italian invention.

But let us not be betrayed from a defence into a critical history of poetry and its influence on society. Be it enough to have pointed out the effects of poets, in the large and true sense of the word, upon their own and all succeeding times.

But poets have been challenged to resign the civic crown to reasoners and mechanists, on another plea. It is admitted that the exercise of the imagination is most delightful, but it is alleged that that of reason is more useful. Let us examine as the grounds of this distinction what is here meant by utility. Pleasure or good, in a general sense, is that which the consciousness of a sensitive and intelligent being seeks, and in which, when found, it acquiesces. There are two kinds of pleasure, one durable, universal, and permanent; the other transitory and particular. Utility may either express the means of producing the former or the latter. In the former sense, whatever strengthens and purifies the affections, enlarges the imagination, and adds spirit to sense, is useful. But a narrower mean-

ing may be assigned to the word utility, confining it to express that which banishes the importunity of the wants of our animal nature, the surrounding men with security of life, the dispersing the grosser delusions of superstition, and the conciliating such a degree of mutual forbearance among men as may consist with the motives of personal advantage.

Undoubtedly the promoters of utility, in this limited sense, have their appointed office in society. They follow the footsteps of poets, and copy the sketches of their creations into the book of common life. They make space, and give time. Their exertions are of the highest value, so long as they confine their administration of the concerns of the inferior powers of our nature within the limits due to the superior ones. But whilst the sceptic destroys gross superstitions, let him spare to deface, as some of the French writers have defaced, the eternal truths charactered upon the imaginations of men. Whilst the mechanist abridges, and the political economist combines labor, let them beware that their speculations, for want of correspondence with those first principles which belong to the imagination, do not tend, as they have in modern England, to exasperate at once the extremes of luxury and want. They have exemplified the saying, "To him that hath, more shall be given; and from him that hath not, the little that he hath shall be taken away." The rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer; and the vessel of the State is driven between the Scylla and Charybdis of anarchy and despotism. Such are the effects which must ever flow from an unmitigated exercise of the calculating faculty.

It is difficult to define pleasure in its highest sense; the definition involving a number of apparent paradoxes. For, from an inexplicable defect of harmony in the constitution of human nature, the pain of the inferior is frequently connected with the pleasures of the superior portions of our being. Sorrow, terror, anguish, despair itself, are often the chosen expressions of an approximation to the highest good. Our sympathy in tragic fiction depends on this principle; tragedy delights by affording a shadow of the pleasure which exists in pain. This is the source also of the melancholy which is inseparable from the sweetest melody. The pleasure that is in sorrow is sweeter than the pleasure of pleasure itself. And

hence the saying, "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of mirth." Not that this highest species of pleasure is necessarily linked with pain. The delight of love and friendship, the ecstasy of the admiration of nature, the joy of the perception and still more of the creation of poetry, is often wholly unalloyed.

The production and assurance of pleasure in this highest sense is true utility. Those who produce and preserve this pleasure are poets or poetical philosophers.

The exertions of Locke, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau,[1] and their disciples, in favor of oppressed and deluded humanity, are entitled to the gratitude of mankind. Yet it is easy to calculate the degree of moral and intellectual improvement which the world would have exhibited, had they never lived. A little more nonsense would have been talked for a century or two; and perhaps a few more men, women, and children burnt as heretics. We might not at this moment have been congratulating each other on the abolition of the Inquisition in Spain. But it exceeds all imagination to conceive what would have been the moral condition of the world if neither Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Calderon, Lord Bacon, nor Milton, had ever existed; if Raphael and Michael Angelo had never been born; if the Hebrew poetry had never been translated; if a revival of the study of Greek literature had never taken place; if no monuments of ancient sculpture had been handed down to us; and if the poetry of the religion of the ancient world had been extinguished together with its belief. The human mind could never, except by the intervention of these excitements, have been awakened to the invention of the grosser sciences, and that application of analytical reasoning to the aberrations of society, which it is now attempted to exalt over the direct expression of the inventive and creative faculty itself.

We have more moral, political, and historical wisdom than we know how to reduce into practice; we have more scientific and economical knowledge than can be accommodated to the just distribution of the produce which it multiplies. The poetry in these systems of thought is concealed by the accumulation

[1] Although Rousseau has been thus classed, he was essentially a poet. The others, even Voltaire, were mere reasoners.

of facts and calculating processes. There is no want of knowledge respecting what is wisest and best in morals, government, and political economy, or at least, what is wiser and better than what men now practise and endure. But we let "*I dare not* wait upon *I would,* like the poor cat in the adage." We want the creative faculty to imagine that which we know; we want the generous impulse to act that which we imagine; we want the poetry of life: our calculations have outrun conception; we have eaten more than we can digest. The cultivation of those sciences which have enlarged the limits of the empire of man over the external world, has, for want of the poetical faculty, proportionally circumscribed those of the internal world; and man, having enslaved the elements, remains himself a slave. To what but a cultivation of the mechanical arts in a degree disproportioned to the presence of the creative faculty, which is the basis of all knowledge, is to be attributed the abuse of all invention for abridging and combining labor, to the exasperation of the inequality of mankind? From what other cause has it arisen that the discoveries which should have lightened, have added a weight to the curse imposed on Adam? Poetry, and the principle of Self, of which money is the visible incarnation, are the God and Mammon of the world.

The functions of the poetical faculty are twofold: by one it creates new materials of knowledge, and power, and pleasure; by the other it engenders in the mind a desire to reproduce and arrange them according to a certain rhythm and order which may be called the beautiful and the good. The cultivation of poetry is never more to be desired than at periods when, from an excess of the selfish and calculating principle, the accumulation of the materials of external life exceed the quantity of the power of assimilating them to the internal laws of human nature. The body has then become too unwieldy for that which animates it.

Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the centre and circumference of knowledge; it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred. It is at the same time the root and blossom of all other systems of thought; it is that from which all spring, and that which adorns all; and that which, if blighted, denies the fruit and the seed, and withholds from the barren world the nourishment

and the succession of the scions of the tree of life. It is the perfect and consummate surface and bloom of all things; it is as the odor and the color of the rose to the texture of the elements which compose it, as the form and splendor of unfaded beauty to the secrets of anatomy and corruption. What were virtue, love, patriotism, friendship—what were the scenery of this beautiful universe which we inhabit; what were our consolations on this side of the grave—and what were our aspirations beyond it, if poetry did not ascend to bring light and fire from those eternal regions where the owl-winged faculty of calculation dare not ever soar? Poetry is not like reasoning, a power to be exerted according to the determination of the will. A man cannot say, "I will compose poetry." The greatest poet even cannot say it; for the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness; this power arises from within, like the color of a flower which fades and changes as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our natures are unprophetic either of its approach or its departure. Could this influence be durable in its original purity and force, it is impossible to predict the greatness of the results; but when composition begins, inspiration is already on the decline, and the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the poet. I appeal to the greatest poets of the present day, whether it is not an error to assert that the finest passages of poetry are produced by labor and study. The toil and the delay recommended by critics can be justly interpreted to mean no more than a careful observation of the inspired moments, and an artificial connection of the spaces between their suggestions by the intertexture of conventional expressions; a necessity only imposed by the limitedness of the poetical faculty itself: for Milton conceived the "Paradise Lost" as a whole before he executed it in portions. We have his own authority also for the Muse having "dictated" to him the "unpremeditated song." And let this be an answer to those who would allege the fifty-six various readings of the first line of the "Orlando Furioso." Compositions so produced are to poetry what mosaic is to painting. This instinct and intuition of the poetical faculty are still more observable in the plastic

and pictorial arts; a great statue or picture grows under the power of the artist as a child in a mother's womb; and the very mind which directs the hands in formation is incapable of accounting to itself for the origin, the gradations, or the *media* of the process.

Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds. We are aware of evanescent visitations of thought and feeling sometimes associated with place or person, sometimes regarding our own mind alone, and always arising unforeseen and departing unbidden, but elevating and delightful beyond all expression: so that even in the desire and the regret they leave, there cannot but be pleasure, participating as it does in the nature of its object. It is as it were the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own; but its footsteps are like those of a wind over the sea, which the coming calm erases, and whose traces remain only as on the wrinkled sand which paves it. These and corresponding conditions of being are experienced principally by those of the most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination; and the state of mind produced by them is at war with every base desire. The enthusiasm of virtue, love, patriotism, and friendship is essentially linked with such emotions; and whilst they last, self appears as what it is, an atom to a universe. Poets are not only subject to these experiences as spirits of the most refined organization, but they can color all that they combine with the evanescent hues of this ethereal world; a word, a trait in the representation of a scene or a passion will touch the enchanted chord, and reanimate, in those who have ever experienced these emotions, the sleeping, the cold, the buried image of the past. Poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world; it arrests the vanishing apparitions which haunt the interlunations of life, and veiling them, or in language or in form, sends them forth among mankind, bearing sweet news of kindred joy to those with whom their sisters abide—abide, because there is no portal of expression from the caverns of the spirit which they inhabit into the universe of things. Poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man.

Poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that

which is most deformed; it marries exultation and horror, grief and pleasure, eternity and change; it subdues to union under its light yoke all irreconcilable things. It transmutes all that it touches, and every form moving within the radiance of its presence is changed by wondrous sympathy to an incarnation of the spirit which it breathes: its secret alchemy turns to potable gold the poisonous waters which flow from death through life; it strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare the naked and sleeping beauty, which is the spirit of its forms.

All things exist as they are perceived: at least in relation to the percipient. "The mind is its own place, and of itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." But poetry defeats the curse which binds us to be subjected to the accident of surrounding impressions. And whether it spreads its own figured curtain, or withdraws life's dark veil from before the scene of things, it equally creates for us a being within our being. It makes us the inhabitants of a world to which the familiar world is a chaos. It reproduces the common universe of which we are portions and percipients, and it purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which obscures from us the wonder of our being. It compels us to feel that which we perceive, and to imagine that which we know. It creates anew the universe, after it has been annihilated in our minds by the recurrence of impressions blunted by reiteration. It justifies the bold and true words of Tasso—"*Non merita nome di creatore, se non Iddio ed il Poeta.*"

A poet, as he is the author to others of the highest wisdom, pleasure, virtue, and glory, so he ought personally to be the happiest, the best, the wisest, and the most illustrious of men. As to his glory, let time be challenged to declare whether the fame of any other institutor of human life be comparable to that of a poet. That he is the wisest, the happiest, and the best, inasmuch as he is a poet, is equally incontrovertible: the greatest poets have been men of the most spotless virtue, of the most consummate prudence, and, if we would look into the interior of their lives, the most fortunate of men: and the exceptions, as they regard those who possessed the poetic faculty in a high yet inferior degree, will be found on consideration to confine rather than destroy the rule. Let us for a mo-

ment stoop to the arbitration of popular breath, and usurping and uniting in our own persons the incompatible characters of accuser, witness, judge, and executioner, let us decide without trial, testimony, or form, that certain motives of those who are "there sitting where we dare not soar," are reprehensible. Let us assume that Homer was a drunkard, that Vergil was a flatterer, that Horace was a coward, that Tasso was a madman, that Lord Bacon was a peculator, that Raphael was a libertine, that Spenser was a poet laureate. It is inconsistent with this division of our subject to cite living poets, but posterity has done ample justice to the great names now referred to. Their errors have been weighed and found to have been dust in the balance; if their sins "were as scarlet, they are now white as snow"; they have been washed in the blood of the mediator and redeemer, Time. Observe in what a ludicrous chaos the imputations of real or fictitious crime have been confused in the contemporary calumnies against poetry and poets; consider how little is as it appears—or appears as it is; look to your own motives, and judge not, lest ye be judged.

Poetry, as has been said, differs in this respect from logic, that it is not subject to the control of the active powers of the mind, and that its birth and recurrence have no necessary connection with the consciousness or will. It is presumptuous to determine that these are the necessary conditions of all mental causation, when mental effects are experienced unsusceptible of being referred to them. The frequent recurrence of the poetical power, it is obvious to suppose, may produce in the mind a habit of order and harmony correlative with its own nature and with its effects upon other minds. But in the intervals of inspiration, and they may be frequent without being durable, a poet becomes a man, and is abandoned to the sudden reflux of the influences under which others habitually live. But as he is more delicately organized than other men, and sensible to pain and pleasure, both his own and that of others, in a degree unknown to them, he will avoid the one and pursue the other with an ardor proportioned to this difference. And he renders himself obnoxious to calumny, when he neglects to observe the circumstances under which these objects of universal pursuit and flight have disguised themselves in one another's garments.

But there is nothing necessarily evil in this error, and thus cruelty, envy, revenge, avarice, and the passions purely evil, have never formed any portion of the popular imputations on the lives of poets.

I have thought it most favorable to the cause of truth to set down these remarks according to the order in which they were suggested to my mind, by a consideration of the subject itself, instead of observing the formality of a polemical reply; but if the view which they contain be just, they will be found to involve a refutation of the arguers against poetry, so far at least as regards the first division of the subject. I can readily conjecture what should have moved the gall of some learned and intelligent writers who quarrel with certain versifiers; I confess myself, like them, unwilling to be stunned by the Theseids of the hoarse Codri of the day. Bavius and Mævius undoubtedly are, as they ever were, insufferable persons. But it belongs to a philosophical critic to distinguish rather than confound.

The first part of these remarks has related to poetry in its elements and principles; and it has been shown, as well as the narrow limits assigned them would permit, that what is called poetry, in a restricted sense, has a common source with all other forms of order and of beauty, according to which the materials of human life are susceptible of being arranged, and which is poetry in an universal sense.

The second part will have for its object an application of these principles to the present state of the cultivation of poetry, and a defence of the attempt to idealize the modern forms of manners and opinions, and compel them into a subordination to the imaginative and creative faculty. For the literature of England, an energetic development of which has ever preceded or accompanied a great and free development of the national will, has arisen as it were from a new birth. In spite of the low-thoughted envy which would undervalue contemporary merit, our own will be a memorable age in intellectual achievements, and we live among such philosophers and poets as surpass beyond comparison any who have appeared since the last national struggle for civil and religious liberty. The most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is poetry. At such periods there is an accumulation of

the power of communicating and receiving intense and impassioned conceptions respecting man and nature. The persons in whom this power resides, may often, as far as regards many portions of their nature, have little apparent correspondence with that spirit of good of which they are the ministers. But even whilst they deny and abjure, they are yet compelled to serve, that power which is seated on the throne of their own soul. It is impossible to read the compositions of the most celebrated writers of the present day without being startled with the electric life which burns within their words. They measure the circumference and sound the depths of human nature with a comprehensive and all-penetrating spirit, and they are themselves perhaps the most sincerely astonished at its manifestations; for it is less their spirit than the spirit of the age. Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present; the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle, and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.

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EARLY VENETIAN PRINTING.

Page from Appian's Roman History.

The two famous Venetian painters, partners in business, Bernard Pictor and Erhardt Ratdolt, were the first to introduce woodcuts as adornments of the printed page. Up to their time miniatures, initial letters, and imaginative borders were inserted by hand. This edition of Appian is quite remarkable for its ruby border, printed on wood. No recent typographical triumphs of any importance in this department have been more than imitations of the consummate skill with which this graceful margin and others of its period have been designed and executed. The work was printed in 1477.

P. Candidi in libros Appiani ſophiſtę Alexandrini ad Nicolaum quintū ſummū pontificem Prefatio incipit feliciſſime.

Ppiani Alexandrini hiſtoriā ſeu ueterū incuria: ſeu temporū iniquitate deperditā: & ueluti longo poſtliminio ad nos redeuntē optime: ac maxime pōtifex Nicolae quinte tuo nutu tuoq; imperio e greca latinā facere inſtitui: ut non modo apud noſtros nota eſſet ſedulitas mei obſequij: ſed ad poſteros quoq; uirtutis tuę fama tranſiret. Quid enim dignius tuis meritis impendi poteſt: q̄ ut ij: qui in ſequenti euo hęc aliquando legent cum ędificiorum magnitudinem ornatū intuebunt: quę ętate noſtra tuo auſpicio confecta ſunt: te Nicolaū eum eſſe intelligant: qui nō minorem in recuperandis libris: q̄ in reſtituendis mœnibus huic urbi adhibueris curam. Et ꝑfecto licet illa prędara: & magna ſint: quę manu & arte conſtant: & a plurimis ſummo ingenio diligentiaq; parantur: pręſtantiora tamen habenda erunt: quę ſtudijs adiuncta: monumentis quoq; ſeruantur litterarū. Itaq; qui Petri Baſilicę contiguam domum admirant: a te ſtructam quadrato lapide: qui Hadriāni molem ujciſſim reſtitutā: qui deorū templū ab Agrippa conditū a te ſuffectū ętate noſtra: qui plura alia breui ceſſura ueruſtati ni tua caritas admouiſſet pias manus: eoſdē quoq; admirari cōueniet tot illuſtres libros ad nos tua opera traductos e grecis: nec tuam ſapientiā nomen dignitatē cōmemoratione laudis ſuę immunes prętcrire: etſi non huius temporis eſſe putem uirtutes tuas elegantiori ſtilo debitas in mediū proferre hoc ſolū dixerim te his rebus geſtis aſſecutum ut uerus pręſul digniſſimus princeps haberere. Sed ut ad Appianū redeam Doleo equidē ſumme pater his i libris

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ON HISTORY

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BY

THOMAS CARLYLE

THOMAS CARLYLE

1795—1881

Thomas Carlyle, one of the most original of all our modern essayists, was born at Ecclefechan, in Dumfriesshire, December 4, 1795. The intelligence of his father, who was a small farmer, and the piety and strong common sense of his mother, are on record. He attended first the parish school of Ecclefechan, and afterwards that of Annan, where he met Edward Irving, when a strong friendship sprang up between them. In 1809, when about fourteen years of age, he came to study at the Edinburgh University. His habits at this time are said to have been lonely and contemplative, and his reading in all kinds of literature assiduous and extensive. He distinguished himself in the mathematical class, and succeeded in gaining the friendship of Professor John Leslie, which we find was shortly afterwards useful to him, in his appointment to a tutorship at Kirkcaldy. Previous to this appointment he taught for two years in the burgh school of Annan. In 1818 he returned to Edinburgh, became a contributor to the "Edinburgh Encyclopædia," and also made a translation of "Legendre's Geometry." In 1823 he acted as tutor to Charles Buller. He published a translation of Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister" in 1824. His "Life of Schiller" appeared in the "London Magazine" (1823-24), at that time counting among its contributors Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey, and Allan Cunningham. In 1826 he married an only daughter of Dr. Welsh of Haddington: on the father's side the Welshes were lineal descendants of John Knox. From the year of his marriage in 1826, till 1834, he resided at Craigenputtoch, a retired farm-house about fifteen miles from Dumfries. In 1834 he removed to London, settling at Chelsea, where he resided till his death. "Sartor Resartus," which was written at Craigenputtoch, appeared by instalments in "Fraser's Magazine," after numerous rejections. His "History of the French Revolution" was published in 1837. This is the ablest of all his works, and is indeed one of the most remarkable books of modern literature. In the same year he delivered a course of lectures on "German Literature," in Willis's Rooms, London; in 1839 he lectured on the "Revolutions of Modern Europe," and in 1840 on "Hero-Worship." This was his last public appearance in this capacity, with the exception of his rectorial address to the Edinburgh students in 1866. Carlyle's other works are, "Past and Present," "Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell," "Latter-day Pamphlets," "Life of John Sterling," "History of Frederick II," "Early Kings of Norway," also an essay on the "Portraits of John Knox." On the occasion of his eightieth birthday he was presented, by a numerous circle of literary friends and admirers, with a gold medal and an address, signed by various friends and well-wishers. He died on February 5, 1881. The publication of Carlyle's essays marked a new era in biographical portraiture. His essay on "History" is one of the finest essays ever written on that subject.

ON HISTORY

CLIO was figured by the ancients as the eldest daughter of Memory, and chief of the Muses; which dignity, whether we regard the essential qualities of her art, or its practice and acceptance among men, we shall still find to have been fitly bestowed. History, as it lies at the root of all science, is also the first distinct product of man's spiritual nature; his earliest expression of what can be called Thought. It is a looking both before and after; as, indeed, the coming Time already waits, unseen, yet definitely shaped, predetermined, and inevitable, in the Time come; and only by the combination of both is the meaning of either completed. The Sibylline Books, though old, are not the oldest. Some nations have prophecy, some have not; but of all mankind, there is no tribe so rude that it has not attempted History, though several have not arithmetic enough to count Five. History has been written with quipo-threads, with feather-pictures, with wampum-belts; still oftener with earth-mounds and monumental stone-heaps, whether as pyramid or cairn; for the Celt and the Copt, the Red man as well as the White, lives between two eternities, and warring against Oblivion, he would fain unite himself in clear conscious relation, as in dim unconscious relation he is already united, with the whole Future and the whole Past.

A talent for History may be said to be born with us, as our chief inheritance. In a certain sense all men are historians. Is not every memory written quite full with Annals, wherein joy and mourning, conquest and loss manifoldly alternate; and, with or without philosophy, the whole fortunes of one little inward Kingdom, and all its politics, foreign and domestic, stand ineffaceably recorded? Our very speech is curiously historical. Most men, you may observe, speak only to narrate; not in imparting what they have thought, which indeed were often a very small matter, but in exhibiting what they have

undergone or seen, which is a quite unlimited one, do talkers dilate. Cut us off from Narrative, how would the stream of conversation, even among the wisest, languish into detached handfuls, and among the foolish utterly evaporate! Thus, as we do nothing but enact History, we say little but recite it: nay, rather, in that widest sense, our whole spiritual life is built thereon. For, strictly considered, what is all Knowledge too but recorded Experience, and a product of History; of which, therefore, Reasoning and Belief, no less than Action and Passion, are essential materials?

Under a limited, and the only practicable shape, History proper, that part of History which treats of remarkable action, has, in all modern as well as ancient times, ranked among the highest arts, and perhaps never stood higher than in these times of ours. For whereas, of old, the charm of History lay chiefly in gratifying our common appetite for the wonderful, for the unknown; and her office was but as that of a Minstrel and Story-teller, she has now further become a Schoolmistress, and professes to instruct in gratifying. Whether with the stateliness of that venerable character, she may not have taken up something of its austerity and frigidity; whether in the logical terseness of a Hume or Robertson, the graceful ease and gay pictorial heartiness of a Herodotus or Froissart may not be wanting, is not the question for us here. Enough that all learners, all inquiring minds of every order, are gathered round her footstool, and reverently pondering her lessons, as the true basis of Wisdom. Poetry, Divinity, Politics, Physics, have each their adherents and adversaries; each little guild supporting a defensive and offensive war for its own special domain; while the domain of History is as a Free Emporium, where all these belligerents peaceably meet and furnish themselves; and Sentimentalist and Utilitarian, Sceptic and Theologian, with one voice advise us: Examine History, for it is "Philosophy teaching by Experience."

Far be it from us to disparage such teaching, the very attempt at which must be precious. Neither shall we too rigidly inquire: How much it has hitherto profited? Whether most of what little practical wisdom men have, has come from study of professed History, or from other less boasted sources, whereby, as matters now stand, a Marlborough may become great

in the world's business with no History save what he derives from Shakespeare's Plays? Nay, whether in that same teaching by Experience, historical Philosophy has yet properly deciphered the first element of all science in this kind: What the aim and significance of that wondrous changeful Life it investigates and paints may be? Whence the course of man's destinies in this Earth originated, and whither they are tending? Or, indeed, if they have any course and tendency, are really guided forward by an unseen mysterious Wisdom, or only circle in blind mazes without recognizable guidance? Which questions, althogether fundamental, one might think, in any Philosophy of History, have, since the era when Monkish Annalists were wont to answer them by the long-ago extinguished light of their Missal and Breviary, been by most philosophical Historians only glanced at dubiously and from afar; by many, not so much as glanced at.

The truth is, two difficulties, never wholly surmountable, lie in the way. Before Philosophy can teach by Experience, the Philosophy has to be in readiness, the Experience must be gathered and intelligibly recorded. Now, overlooking the former consideration, and with regard only to the latter, let anyone who has examined the current of human affairs, and how intricate, perplexed, unfathomable, even when seen into with our own eyes, are their thousand-fold blending movements, say whether the true representing of it is easy or impossible. Social Life is the aggregate of all the individual men's Lives who constitute society; History is the essence of innumerable Biographies. But if one Biography, nay, our own Biography, study and recapitulate it as we may, remains in so many points unintelligible to us, how much more must these million, the very facts of which, to say nothing of the purport of them, we know not, and cannot know!

Neither will it adequately avail us to assert that the general inward condition of Life is the same in all ages; and that only the remarkable deviations from the common endowment and common lot, and the more important variations which the outward figure of Life has from time to time undergone, deserve memory and record. The inward condition of Life, it may rather be affirmed, the conscious or half-conscious aim of mankind, so far as men are not mere digesting-machines, is the

same in no two ages; neither are the more important outward variations easy to fix on, or always well capable of representation. Which was the greater innovator, which was the more important personage in man's history—he who first led armies over the Alps, and gained the victories of Cannæ and Thrasymene; or the nameless boor who first hammered out for himself an iron spade? When the oak-tree is felled, the whole forest echoes with it; but a hundred acorns are planted silently by some unnoticed breeze. Battles and war-tumults, which for the time din every ear, and with joy or terror intoxicate every heart, pass away like tavern-brawls; and, except some few Marathons and Morgartens, are remembered by accident, not by desert. Laws themselves, political Constitutions, are not our Life, but only the house wherein our Life is led: nay, they are but the bare walls of the house; all whose essential furniture, the inventions and traditions, and daily habits that regulate and support our existence, are the work not of Dracos and Hampdens, but of Phœnician mariners, of Italian masons and Saxon metallurgists, of philosophers, alchemists, prophets, and all the long-forgotten train of artists and artisans, who from the first have been jointly teaching us how to think and how to act, how to rule over spiritual and over physical Nature. Well may we say that of our History the more important part is lost without recovery; and—as thanksgivings were once wont to be offered "for unrecognized mercies"—look with reverence into the dark untenanted places of the Past, where, in formless oblivion, our chief benefactors, with all their sedulous endeavors, but not with the fruit of these, lie entombed.

So imperfect is that same Experience, by which Philosophy is to teach. Nay, even with regard to those occurrences which do stand recorded, which, at their origin have seemed worthy of record, and the summary of which constitutes what we now call History, is not our understanding of them altogether incomplete; is it even possible to represent them as they were? The old story of Sir Walter Raleigh's looking from his prison window on some street tumult, which afterward three witnesses reported in three different ways, himself differing from them all, is still a true lesson to us. Consider how it is that historical documents and records originate; even honest records, where the reporters were unbiassed by personal regard; a case which,

were nothing more wanted, must ever be among the rarest. The real leading features of a historical Transaction, whose movements that essentially characterize it, and alone deserve to be recorded, are nowise the foremost to be noted. At first, among the various witnesses, who are also parties interested, there is only vague wonder, and fear of hope, and the noise of Rumor's thousand tongues; till, after a season, the conflict of testimonies has subsided into some general issue; and then it is settled, by majority of votes, that such and such a "Crossing of the Rubicon," an "Impeachment of Strafford," a "Convocation of the Notables," are epochs in the world's history, cardinal points on which grand world-revolutions have hinged. Suppose, however, that the majority of votes was all wrong; that the real cardinal points lay far deeper; and had been passed over unnoticed, because no Seer, but only mere Onlookers, chanced to be there! Our clock strikes when there is a change from hour to hour; but no hammer in the horologe of Time peals through the universe when there is a change from Era to Era. Men understand not what is among their hands; as calmness is the characteristic of strength, so the weightiest causes may be most silent. It is, in no case, the real historical Transaction, but only some more or less plausible scheme and theory of the Transaction, or the harmonized result of many such schemes, each varying from the other and all varying from truth, that we can ever hope to behold.

Nay, were our faculty of insight into passing things never so complete, there is still a fatal discrepancy between our manner of observing these, and their manner of occurring. The most gifted man can observe, still more can record, only the *series* of his own impressions: his observation, therefore, to say nothing of its other imperfections, must be *successive*, while the things done were often *simultaneous;* the things done were not a series, but a group. It is not in acted, as it is in written History; actual events are nowise so simply related to each other as parent and offspring are; every single event is the offspring not of one, but of all other events prior or contemporaneous, and will in its turn combine with all others to give birth to new: it is an ever-living, ever-working Chaos of Being, wherein shape after shape bodies itself forth from innumerable

elements. And this Chaos, boundless as the habitation and duration of man, unfathomable as the soul and destiny of man, is what the historian will depict, and scientifically gauge, we may say, by threading it with single lines of a few ells in length! For as all action is, by its nature, to be figured as extended in breadth and in depth, as well as in length; that is to say, is based on Passion and Mystery, if we investigate its origin; and spreads abroad on all hands, modifying and modified; as well as advances toward completion—so all Narrative is, by its nature, of only one dimension; only travels forward toward one, or toward successive points: Narrative is *linear*, Action is *solid*. Alas for our "chains," or chainlets, of "causes and effects," which we so assiduously track through certain handbreadths of years and square miles, when the whole is a broad, deep Immensity, and each atom is "chained" and complected with all! Truly, if History is Philosophy teaching by Experience, the writer fitted to compose History is hitherto an unknown man. The experience itself would require All-knowledge to record it—were the All-wisdom needful for such Philosophy as would interpret it, to be had for asking. Better were it that mere earthly Historians should lower such pretensions, more suitable for Omniscience than for human science; and aiming only at some picture of the things acted, which picture itself will at best be a poor approximation, leave the inscrutable purport of them an acknowledged secret; or at most, in reverent Faith, far different from that teaching of Philosophy, pause over the mysterious vestiges of Him, whose path is in the great deep of Time, whom History indeed reveals, but only all History, and in Eternity, will clearly reveal.

Such considerations truly were of small profit, did they, instead of teaching us vigilance and reverent humility in our inquiries into History, abate our esteem for them, or discourage us from unweariedly prosecuting them. Let us search more and more into the Past; let all men explore it, as the true fountain of knowledge; by whose light alone, consciously or unconsciously employed, can the Present and the Future be interpreted or guessed at. For though the whole meaning lies far beyond our ken; yet in that complex Manuscript, covered over with formless inextricably entangled unknown characters —nay, which is a *Palimpsest*, and had once prophetic writing,

still dimly legible there—some letters, some words, may be deciphered; and if no complete Philosophy, here and there an intelligible precept, available in practice, be gathered: well understanding, in the mean while, that it is only a little portion we have deciphered; that much still remains to be interpreted; that History is a real Prophetic Manuscript, and can be fully interpreted by no man.

But the Artist in History may be distinguished from the 'Artisan in History; for here, as in all other provinces, there are Artists and Artisans; men who labor mechanically in a department, without eye for the Whole, not feeling that there is a Whole; and men who inform and ennoble the humblest department with an Idea of the Whole, and habitually know that only in the Whole is the Partial to be truly discerned. The proceedings and the duties of these two, in regard to History, must be altogether different. Not, indeed, that each has not a real worth, in his several degree. The simple husbandman can till his field, and by knowledge he has gained of its soil, sow it with the fit grain, though the deep rocks and central fires are unknown to him: his little crop hangs under and over the firmament of stars, and sails through whole untracked celestial spaces, between Aries and Libra; nevertheless, it ripens for him in due season, and he gathers it safe into his barn. As a husbandman he is blameless in disregarding those higher wonders; but as a thinker, and faithful inquirer into Nature, he were wrong. So likewise is it with the Historian, who examines some special aspect of History; and from this or that combination of circumstances, political, moral, economical, and the issues it has led to, infers that such and such properties belong to human society, and that the like circumstances will produce the like issue; which inference, if other trials confirm it, must be held true and practically valuable. He is wrong only, and an artisan, when he fancies that these properties, discovered or discoverable, exhaust the matter; and sees not, at every step, that it is inexhaustible.

However, that class of cause-and-effect speculators, with whom no wonder would remain wonderful, but all things in Heaven and Earth must be computed and "accounted for"; and even the Unknown, the Infinite in man's Life, had, under the words *enthusiasm, superstition, spirit of the age*, and so forth,

Invisible as well as of the Visible Church; which latter, if disjoined from the former, is but a vacant edifice; gilded, it may be, and overhung with old votive gifts, yet useless, nay, pestilentially unclean; to write whose history is less important than to forward its downfall.

Of a less ambitious character are the Histories that relate to special separate provinces of human Action; to Sciences, Practical Arts, Institutions, and the like; matters which do not imply an epitome of man's whole interest and form of life; but wherein, though each is still connected with all, the spirit of each, at least its material results, may be in some degree evolved without so strict a reference to that of the others. Highest in dignity and difficulty, under this head, would be our histories of Philosophy, of man's opinions and theories respecting the nature of his Being, and relations to the Universe Visible and Invisible: which History, indeed, were it fitly treated, or fit for right treatment, would be a province of Church History; the logical or dogmatical province thereof; for Philosophy, in its true sense, is or should be the soul, of which Religion, Worship, is the body; in the healthy state of things the Philosopher and Priest were one and the same. But Philosophy itself is far enough from wearing this character; neither have its Historians been men, generally speaking, that could in the smallest degree approximate it thereto. Scarcely since the rude era of the Magi and Druids has that same healthy identification of Priest and Philosopher had place in any country: but rather the worship of divine things, and the scientific investigation of divine things, have been in quite different hands, their relations not friendly but hostile. Neither have the Brückers and Bühles, to say nothing of the many unhappy Enfields who have treated of that latter department, been more than barren reporters, often unintelligent and unintelligible reporters, of the doctrine uttered; without force to discover how the doctrine originated, or what reference it bore to its time and country, to the spiritual position of mankind there and then. Nay, such a task did not perhaps lie before them, as a thing to be attempted.

Art also and Literature are intimately blended with Religion; as it were, outworks and abutments, by which that highest pinnacle in our inward world gradually connects itself with the general level, and becomes accessible therefrom. He

who should write a proper History of Poetry, would depict for us the successive Revelations which man had obtained of the Spirit of Nature; under what aspects he had caught and endeavored to body forth some glimpse of that unspeakable Beauty, which in its highest clearness is Religion, is the inspiration of a Prophet, yet in one or the other degree must inspire every true Singer, were his theme never so humble. We should see by what steps men had ascended to the Temple; how near they had approached; by what ill-hap they had, for long periods, turned away from it, and grovelled on the plain with no music in the air, or blindly struggled toward other heights. That among all our Eichhorns and Wartons there is no such Historian, must be too clear to everyone. Nevertheless, let us not despair of far nearer approaches to that excellence. Above all, let us keep the Ideal of it ever in our eye; for thereby alone have we even a chance to reach it.

Our histories of Laws and Constitutions, wherein many a Montesquieu and Hallam have labored with acceptance, are of a much simpler nature; yet deep enough if thoroughly investigated; and useful, when authentic, even with little depth. Then we have Histories of Medicine, of Mathematics, of Astronomy, Commerce, Chivalry, Monkery; and Goguets and Beckmanns have come forward with what might be the most bountiful contribution of all, a History of Inventions. Of all which sorts, and many more not here enumerated, not yet devised and put in practice, the merit and the proper scheme may, in our present limits, require no exposition.

In this manner, though, as above remarked, all Action is extended three ways, and the general sum of human Action is a whole Universe, with all limits of it unknown, does History strive by running path after path, through the Impassable, in manifold directions and intersections, to secure for us some oversight of the Whole; in which endeavor, if each Historian look well around him from his path, tracking it out with the *eye*, not, as is more common, with the *nose*, she may at last prove not altogether unsuccessful. Praying only that increased division of labor do not here, as elsewhere, aggravate our already strong Mechanical tendencies, so that in the manual dexterity for parts we lose all command over the whole, and the hope of any Philosophy of History be farther off than ever —let us all wish her great and greater success.

MACHIAVELLI

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MILTON

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BY

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

Lord Macaulay

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY, LORD MACAULAY

1800—1859

Thomas Babington Macaulay was born in 1800, and died in 1859. He early became eminent both as a politician and as a writer. He entered Parliament in 1830, and was a member of the Legislative Council of India from 1834 to 1838, and twice after his return to England (1839 and 1847) sat in the Cabinet. He was raised to the peerage in 1857. His main literary works are his "History of England," his "Essays," and his "Lays of Ancient Rome." The "history," of which four volumes were published during his lifetime (1848-55), and one after his death, is merely a fragment of the work he had intended to produce.

Macaulay's style is the perfection of clearness. Not an ambiguous sentence is to be found throughout his works. His writings are distinguished by great vigor, and are rendered attractive, even when dealing with subjects dry in themselves, by pointed antithesis and by profuse illustration. His style alone would have insured his popularity, but his success as a writer was increased by other causes. From the circumstances of his life, he wrote of politics, and especially of English politics, with the advantage of having taken an active part in public life. Hence he writes of English history with a knowledge and sympathy which cannot be gained merely from books. He had the art of clothing in the most brilliant language the views generally prevalent in his time. His opinions were almost always the opinions of the vast majority of his readers, expressed in the most forcible and striking words.

His deficiencies are closely connected with his merits. His style itself, though perfectly clear, is wanting in compression, and is occasionally overburdened with illustrations. His arguments, though expressed with vigor, are not always convincing, and are rarely original. His views of politics and history, and the arguments by which he supports them, are the views and arguments of the Whig writers with whom he associated. Even in his treatment of English history he follows in the footsteps of Hallam. He has, in short, both the merits and the defects natural to a writer who employs the whole force of a powerful mind and imagination in supporting and illustrating the opinions of the sensible and liberal persons of his generation.

Macaulay's essay on "Milton" was contributed to the "Edinburgh Review" in 1825, and was the first of a long series of brilliant literary and historical essays which he contributed to the same periodical. His essay on "Macchiavelli" was published in 1827. Macaulay's essays, in virtue of their inimitable style, have obtained a high place among English classics.

MACHIAVELLI

THOSE who have attended to this practice of our literary tribunal are well aware, that, by means of certain legal fictions similar to those of Westminster Hall, we are frequently enabled to take cognizance of cases lying beyond the sphere of our original jurisdiction. We need hardly say, therefore, that, in the present instance, M. Périer [1] is merely a Richard Roe, who will not be mentioned in any subsequent stage of the proceedings, and whose name is used for the sole purpose of bringing Machiavelli [2] into court.

We doubt whether any name in literary history be so generally odious as that of the man whose character and writings we now propose to consider. The terms in which he is commonly described would seem to import that he was the Tempter, the Evil Principle, the discoverer of ambition and revenge, the original inventor of perjury, and that, before the publication of his fatal "Prince," there had never been a hypocrite, a tyrant, or a traitor, a simulated virtue, or a convenient crime. One writer gravely assures us that Maurice of Saxony learned all his fraudulent policy from that execrable volume. Another remarks, that, since it was translated into Turkish, the sultans have been more addicted than formerly to the custom of strangling their brothers. Lord Lyttelton charges the poor Florentine with the manifold treasons of the house of Guise, and with the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. Several authors have hinted that the Gunpowder Plot is to be primarily

[1] *Œuvres completes de* Machiavel, *traduites par* J. V. Périer, Paris.

[2] The subject of this essay by Lord Macaulay was born in Florence of noble ancestry in May 3, 1469. His father was a jurist of some note, and furnished his son with the best facilities for education. At the early age of twenty-five years Niccolo Machiavelli entered public life in the diplomatic service of his country, and for eighteen years was a very prominent figure in Florentine politics. With the accession to power of the Medici he was deprived of office, exiled, arrested, imprisoned, racked, and not released till Giovanni de' Medici became pope. He then retired to the country, where, in the remaining years of his life, he produced the literary works which have made his name immortal. He accomplished his own restoration to favor with the ruling family, but was never again a prominent factor in political life. He died in 1527, aged fifty-eight years.]

attributed to his doctrines, and seem to think that his effigy ought to be substituted for that of Guy Fawkes, in those processions by which the ingenuous youth of England annually commemorate the preservation of the Three Estates. The Church of Rome has pronounced his works accursed things. Nor have our own countrymen been backward in testifying their opinion of his merits. Out of his surname they have coined an epithet for a knave, and out of his Christian name a synonym for the Devil.[8]

It is indeed scarcely possible for any person, not well acquainted with the history and literature of Italy, to read without horror and amazement the celebrated treatise which has brought so much obloquy on the name of Machiavelli. Such a display of wickedness, naked yet not ashamed, such cool, judicious, scientific atrocity, seemed rather to belong to a fiend than to the most depraved of men. Principles which the most hardened ruffian would scarcely hint to his most trusted accomplice, or avow, without the disguise of some palliating sophism, even to his own mind, are professed without the slightest circumlocution, and assumed as the fundamental axioms of all political science.

It is not strange that ordinary readers should regard the author of such a book as the most depraved and shameless of human beings. Wise men, however, have always been inclined to look with great suspicion on the angels and demons of the multitude; and, in the present instance, several circumstances have led even superficial observers to question the justice of the vulgar decision. It is notorious that Machiavelli was, through life, a zealous republican. In the same year in which he composed his manual of "King-craft," he suffered imprisonment and torture in the cause of public liberty. It seems inconceivable that the martyr of freedom should have designedly acted as the apostle of tyranny. Several eminent writers have, therefore, endeavored to detect in this unfortunate performance some concealed meaning, more consistent with the character and conduct of the author than that which appears at the first glance.

[8] "Nick Machiavel had ne'er a trick,
Tho' he gave his name to our old Nick."
—"Hudibras," part III. canto I.

But we believe there is a schism on this subject among the antiquarians.

One hypothesis is, that Machiavelli intended to practise on the young Lorenzo de' Medici a fraud similar to that which Sunderland is said to have employed against our James II, and that he urged his pupil to violent and perfidious measures, as the surest means of accelerating the moment of deliverance and revenge. Another supposition, which Lord Bacon seems to countenance, is that the treatise was merely a piece of grave irony, intended to warn nations against the arts of ambitious men. It would be easy to show that neither of these solutions is consistent with many passages in "The Prince" itself. But the most decisive refutation is that which is furnished by the other works of Machiavelli. In all the writings which he gave to the public, and in all those which the research of editors has, in the course of three centuries, discovered; in his comedies, designed for the entertainment of the multitude; in his "Comments on Livy," intended for the perusal of the most enthusiastic patriots of Florence; in his history, inscribed to one of the most amiable and estimable of the popes; in his public despatches; in his private memoranda—the same obliquity of moral principle for which "The Prince" is so severely censured is more or less discernible. We doubt whether it would be possible to find, in all the many volumes of his compositions, a single expression indicating that dissimulation and treachery had ever struck him as discreditable.

After this, it may seem ridiculous to say that we are acquainted with few writings which exhibit so much elevation of sentiment, so pure and warm a zeal for the public good, or so just a view of the duties and rights of citizens, as those of Machiavelli. Yet so it is. And even from "The Prince" itself we could select many passages in support of this remark. To a reader of our age and country, this inconsistency is, at first, perfectly bewildering. The whole man seems to be an enigma, a grotesque assemblage of incongruous qualities, selfishness and generosity, cruelty and benevolence, craft and simplicity, abject villany and romantic heroism. One sentence is such as a veteran diplomatist would scarcely write in cipher for the direction of his most confidential spy: the next seems to be extracted from a theme composed by an ardent schoolboy on the death of Leonidas. An act of dexterous perfidy and an act of patriotic self-devotion call forth the same kind

and the same degree of respectful admiration. The moral sensibility of the writer seems at once to be morbidly obtuse and morbidly acute. Two characters altogether dissimilar are united in him. They are not merely joined, but interwoven. They are the warp and the woof of his mind; and their combination, like that of the variegated threads in shot silk, gives to the whole texture a glancing and ever-changing appearance. The explanation might have been easy if he had been a very weak or a very affected man. But he was evidently neither the one nor the other. His works prove, beyond all contradiction, that his understanding was strong, his taste pure, and his sense of the ridiculous exquisitely keen.

This is strange, and yet the strangest is behind. There is no reason whatever to think that those amongst whom he lived saw anything shocking or incongruous in his writings. Abundant proofs remain of the high estimation in which both his works and his person were held by the most respectable among his contemporaries. Clement VII patronized the publication of those very books which the Council of Trent, in the following generation, pronounced unfit for the perusal of Christians. Some members of the democratical party censured the secretary for dedicating "The Prince" to a patron who bore the unpopular name of Medici. But, to those immoral doctrines which have since called forth such severe reprehensions no exception appears to have been taken. The cry against them was first raised beyond the Alps, and seems to have been heard with amazement in Italy. The earliest assailant, as far as we are aware, was a countryman of our own, Cardinal Pole. The author of the "Anti-Machiavelli" was a French Protestant.

It is, therefore, in the state of moral feeling among the Italians of those times that we must seek for the real explanation of what seems most mysterious in the life and writings of this remarkable man. As this is a subject which suggests many interesting considerations, both political and metaphysical, we shall make no apology for discussing it at some length.

During the gloomy and disastrous centuries which followed the downfall of the Roman Empire, Italy had preserved, in a far greater degree than any other part of western Europe, the traces of ancient civilization. The night which descended

upon her was the night of an Arctic summer. The dawn began to reappear before the last reflection of the preceding sunset had faded from the horizon. It was in the time of the French Merovingians and of the Saxon Heptarchy that ignorance and ferocity seemed to have done their worst. Yet even then the Neapolitan provinces, recognizing the authority of the Eastern Empire, preserved something of Eastern knowledge and refinement. Rome, protected by the sacred character of her pontiffs, enjoyed at least comparative security and repose. Even in those regions where the sanguinary Lombards had fixed their monarchy, there was incomparably more of wealth, of information, of physical comfort, and of social order, than could be found in Gaul, Britain, or Germany.

That which most distinguished Italy from the neighboring countries was the importance which the population of the towns, at a very early period, began to acquire. Some cities had been founded in wild and remote situations, by fugitives who had escaped from the rage of the barbarians. Such were Venice and Genoa, which preserved their freedom by their obscurity, till they became able to preserve it by their power. Other cities seem to have retained, under all the changing dynasties of invaders, under Odoacer and Theodoric, Narses and Alboin, the municipal institutions which had been conferred on them by the liberal policy of the Great Republic. In provinces which the central government was too feeble either to protect or to oppress, these institutions gradually acquired stability and vigor. The citizens, defended by their walls, and governed by their own magistrates and their own by-laws, enjoyed a considerable share of republican independence. Thus a strong democratic spirit was called into action. The Carlovingian sovereigns were too imbecile to subdue it. The generous policy of Otho encouraged it. It might perhaps have been suppressed by a close coalition between the Church and the empire. It was fostered and invigorated by their disputes. In the twelfth century it attained its full vigor, and, after a long and doubtful conflict, triumphed over the abilities and courage of the Swabian princes.

The assistance of the ecclesiastical power had greatly contributed to the success of the Guelfs. That success would, however, have been a doubtful good, if its only effect had been

to substitute a moral for a political servitude, and to exalt the popes at the expense of the Cæsars. Happily the public mind of Italy had long contained the seeds of free opinions, which were now rapidly developed by the genial influence of free institutions. The people of that country had observed the whole machinery of the Church, its saints and its miracles, its lofty pretensions and its splendid ceremonial, its worthless blessings and its harmless curses, too long and too closely to be duped. They stood behind the scenes on which others were gazing with childish awe and interest. They witnessed the arrangement of the pulleys and the manufacture of the thunders. They saw the natural faces, and heard the natural voices, of the actors. Distant nations looked on the Pope as the vicegerent of the Almighty, the oracle of the All-Wise, the umpire from whose decisions, in the disputes either of theologians or of kings, no Christian ought to appeal. The Italians were acquainted with all the follies of his youth, and with all the dishonest arts by which he had attained power. They knew how often he had employed the keys of the Church to release himself from the most sacred engagements, and its wealth to pamper his mistresses and nephews. The doctrines and rites of the established religion they treated with decent reverence. But, though they still called themselves Catholics, they had ceased to be papists. Those spiritual arms which carried terror into the palaces and camps of the proudest sovereigns, excited only contempt in the immediate neighborhood of the Vatican. Alexander, when he commanded our Henry II to submit to the lash before the tomb of a rebellious subject, was himself an exile. The Romans, apprehending that he entertained designs against their liberties, had driven him from their city; and, though he solemnly promised to confine himself for the future to his spiritual functions, they still refused to readmit him.

In every other part of Europe, a large and powerful privileged class trampled on the people, and defied the government. But, in the most flourishing parts of Italy, the feudal nobles were reduced to comparative insignificance. In some districts they took shelter under the protection of the powerful commonwealths which they were unable to oppose, and gradually sank into the mass of burghers. In other places, they pos-

sessed great influence; but it was an influence widely different from that which was exercised by the aristocracy of any trans-Alpine kingdom. They were not petty princes, but eminent citizens. Instead of strengthening their fastnesses among the mountains, they embellished their palaces in the market-place. The state of society in the Neapolitan dominions, and in some parts of the ecclesiastical State, more nearly resembled that which existed in the great monarchies of Europe. But the governments of Lombardy and Tuscany, through all their revolutions, preserved a different character. A people, when assembled in a town, is far more formidable to its rulers than when dispersed over a wide extent of country. The most arbitrary of the Cæsars found it necessary to feed and divert the inhabitants of their unwieldy capital at the expense of the provinces. The citizens of Madrid have more than once besieged their sovereign in his own palace, and extorted from him the most humiliating concessions. The sultans have often been compelled to propitiate the furious rabble of Constantinople with the head of an unpopular vizier. From the same cause, there was a certain tinge of democracy in the monarchies and aristocracies of northern Italy.

Thus liberty, partially indeed and transiently, revisited Italy; and with liberty came commerce and empire, science and taste, all the comforts and all the ornaments of life. The Crusades, from which the inhabitants of other countries gained nothing but relics and wounds, brought to the rising commonwealths of the Adriatic and Tyrrhene seas a large increase of wealth, dominion, and knowledge. The moral and the geographical position of those commonwealths enabled them to profit alike by the barbarism of the West and by the civilization of the East. Italian ships covered every sea. Italian factories rose on every shore. The tables of Italian money-changers were set in every city. Manufactures flourished. Banks were established. The operations of the commercial machine were facilitated by many useful and beautiful inventions. We doubt whether any country of Europe, our own excepted, has at the present time reached so high a point of wealth and civilization as some parts of Italy had attained 400 years ago. Historians rarely descend to those details from which alone the real state of a community can be collected. Hence posterity

is too often deceived by the vague hyperboles of poets and rhetoricians, who mistake the splendor of a court for the happiness of a people. Fortunately, John Villani has given us an ample and precise account of the state of Florence in the early part of the fourteenth century. The revenue of the republic amounted to 300,000 florins, a sum which, allowing for the depreciation of the precious metals, was at least equivalent to £600,000 sterling—a larger sum than England and Ireland, two centuries ago, yielded annually to Elizabeth. The manufacture of wool alone employed 200 factories and 30,000 workmen. The cloth annually produced sold, at an average, for 1,200,000 florins—a sum fully equal, in exchangeable value, to £2,500,000 of our money. Four hundred thousand florins were annually coined. Eighty banks conducted the commercial operations, not of Florence only, but of all Europe. The transactions of these establishments were sometimes of a magnitude which may surprise even the contemporaries of the Barings and the Rothschilds. Two houses advanced to Edward III of England upwards of 300,000 marks, at a time when the mark contained more silver than fifty shillings of the present day, and when the value of silver was more than quadruple of what it now is. The city and its environs contained 170,000 inhabitants. In the various schools about 10,000 children were taught to read, 1,200 studied arithmetic, 600 received a learned education.

The progress of elegant literature and of the fine arts was proportioned to that of the public prosperity. Under the despotic successors of Augustus all the fields of the intellect had been turned into arid wastes, still marked out by formal boundaries, still retaining the traces of old cultivation, but yielding neither flowers nor fruit. The deluge of barbarism came. It swept away all the landmarks. It obliterated all the signs of former tillage. But it fertilized while it devastated. When it receded, the wilderness was as the garden of God, rejoicing on every side, laughing, clapping its hands, pouring forth, in spontaneous abundance, everything brilliant or fragrant or nourishing. A new language, characterized by simple sweetness and simple energy, had attained perfection. No tongue ever furnished more gorgeous and vivid tints to poetry; nor was it long before a poet appeared who knew how to employ

them. Early in the fourteenth century came forth "The Divine Comedy," beyond comparison the greatest work of imagination which had appeared since the poems of Homer. The following generation produced indeed no second Dante, but it was eminently distinguished by general intellectual activity. The study of the Latin writers had never been wholly neglected in Italy. But Petrarch introduced a more profound, liberal, and elegant scholarship, had communicated to his countrymen that enthusiasm for the literature, the history, and the antiquities of Rome, which divided his own heart with a frigid mistress and a more frigid muse. Boccaccio turned their attention to the more sublime and graceful models of Greece.

From this time, the admiration of learning and genius became almost an idolatry among the people of Italy. Kings and republics, cardinals and doges, vied with each other in honoring and flattering Petrarch. Embassies from rival States solicited the honor of his instructions. His coronation agitated the Court of Naples and the people of Rome as much as the most important political transaction could have done. To collect books and antiques, to found professorships, to patronize men of learning, became almost universal fashions among the great. The spirit of literary research allied itself to that of commercial enterprise. Every place to which the merchant princes of Florence extended their gigantic traffic, from the bazars of the Tigris to the monasteries of the Clyde, was ransacked for medals and manuscripts. Architecture, painting, and sculpture were munificently encouraged. Indeed, it would be difficult to name an Italian of eminence, during the period of which we speak, who, whatever may have been his general character, did not at least affect a love of letters and of the arts.

Knowledge and public prosperity continued to advance together. Both attained their meridian in the age of Lorenzo the Magnificent. We cannot refrain from quoting the splendid passage in which the Tuscan Thucydides describes the state of Italy at that period. "*Ridotta tutta in somma pace e tranquillità, coltivata non meno ne' luoghi più montuosi e più sterili che nelle pianure e regioni più fertili, nè sottoposta ad altro imperio che de' suoi medesimi, non solo era abbondantissima d' abitatori e di ricchezze; ma illustrata somma-*

mente dalla magnificenza di molti principi, dallo splendore di molte nobilissime e bellissime città, dalla sedia e maestà della religione, fioriva d' uomini prestantissimi nell' amministrazione delle cose pubbliche, e d' ingegni molto nobili in tutte le scienze, ed in qualunque arte preclara ed industriosa." When we peruse this just and splendid description, we can scarcely persuade ourselves that we are reading of times in which the annals of England and France present us only with a frightful spectacle of poverty, barbarity, and ignorance. From the oppressions of illiterate masters, and the sufferings of a degraded peasantry, it is delightful to turn to the opulent and enlightened States of Italy, to the vast and magnificent cities, the ports, the arsenals, the villas, the museums, the libraries, the marts filled with every article of comfort or luxury, the factories swarming with artisans, the Apennines covered with rich cultivation up to their very summits, the Po wafting the harvests of Lombardy to the granaries of Venice, and carrying back the silks of Bengal and the furs of Siberia to the palaces of Milan. With peculiar pleasure every cultivated mind must repose on the fair, the happy, the glorious Florence, the halls which rang with the mirth of Pulci, the cell where twinkled the midnight lamp of Politian, the statues on which the young eye of Michael Angelo glared with the frenzy of a kindred inspiration, the gardens in which Lorenzo meditated some sparkling song for the May-day dance of the Etrurian virgins. Alas for the beautiful city! Alas for the wit and the learning, the genius and the love!

> "*Le donne, e i cavalier, gli affanni e gli agi,*
> *Che ne'nvogliava amore e cortesia*
> *Là dove i cuor son fatti sì malvagi.*"

A time was at hand when all the seven vials of the Apocalypse were to be poured forth and shaken out over those pleasant countries—a time of slaughter, famine, beggary, infamy, slavery, despair.

In the Italian States, as in many natural bodies, untimely decrepitude was the penalty of precocious maturity. Their early greatness, and their early decline, are principally to be attributed to the same cause—the preponderance which the towns acquired in the political system.

In a community of hunters or of shepherds every man easily and necessarily becomes a soldier. His ordinary avocations are perfectly compatible with all the duties of military service. However remote may be the expedition on which he is bound, he finds it easy to transport with him the stock from which he derives his subsistence. The whole people in an army, the whole year a march. Such was the state of society which facilitated the gigantic conquests of Attila and Tamerlane.

But a people which subsists by the cultivation of the earth is in a very different situation. The husbandman is bound to the soil on which he labors. A long campaign would be ruinous to him. Still, his pursuits are such as give to his frame both the active and the passive strength necessary to a soldier. Nor do they, at least in the infancy of agricultural science, demand his uninterrupted attention. At particular times of the year he is almost wholly unemployed, and can, without injury to himself, afford the time necessary for a short expedition. Thus the legions of Rome were supplied during its earlier wars. The season during which the fields did not require the presence of the cultivators sufficed for a short inroad and a battle. These operations, too frequently interrupted to produce decisive results, yet served to keep up among the people a degree of discipline and courage which rendered them not only secure but formidable. The archers and billmen of the Middle Ages, who, with provisions for forty days at their backs, left the fields for the camp, were troops of the same description.

But when commerce and manufactures begin to flourish, a great change takes place. The sedentary habits of the desk and the loom render the exertions and hardships of war insupportable. The business of traders and artisans requires their constant presence and attention. In such a community there is little superfluous time; but there is generally much superfluous money. Some members of the society are, therefore, hired to relieve the rest from a task inconsistent with their habits and engagements.

The history of Greece is, in this, as in many other respects, the best commentary on the history of Italy. Five hundred years before the Christian era the citizens of the republics round the Ægean Sea formed perhaps the finest militia that ever existed. As wealth and refinement advanced, the system

underwent a gradual alteration. The Ionian States were the first in which commerce and the arts were cultivated, and the first in which the ancient discipline decayed. Within eighty years after the battle of Platæa, mercenary troops were everywhere plying for battles and sieges. In the time of Demosthenes, it was scarcely possible to persuade or compel the Athenians to enlist for foreign service. The laws of Lycurgus prohibited trade and manufactures. The Spartans, therefore, continued to form a national force long after their neighbors had begun to hire soldiers. But their military spirit declined with their singular institutions. In the second century before Christ, Greece contained only one nation of warriors, the savage highlanders of Ætolia, who were some generations behind their countrymen in civilization and intelligence.

All the causes which produced these effects among the Greeks acted still more strongly on the modern Italians. Instead of a power like Sparta, in its nature warlike, they had amongst them an ecclesiastical state, in its nature pacific. Where there are numerous slaves, every freeman is induced by the strongest motives to familiarize himself with the use of arms. The commonwealths of Italy did not, like those of Greece, swarm with thousands of these household enemies. Lastly, the mode in which military operations were conducted during the prosperous times of Italy was peculiarly unfavorable to the formation of an efficient militia. Men covered with iron from head to foot, armed with ponderous lances, and mounted on horses of the largest breed, were considered as composing the strength of an army. The infantry was regarded as comparatively worthless, and was neglected till it became really so. These tactics maintained their ground for centuries in most parts of Europe. That foot-soldiers could withstand the charge of heavy cavalry was thought utterly impossible, till, towards the close of the fifteenth century, the rude mountaineers of Switzerland dissolved the spell, and astounded the most experienced generals by receiving the dreaded shock on an impenetrable forest of pikes.

The use of the Grecian spear, the Roman sword, or the modern bayonet, might be acquired with comparative ease. But nothing short of the daily exercise of years could train the man at arms to support his ponderous panoply, and manage his un-

wieldy weapon. Throughout Europe this most important branch of war became a separate profession. Beyond the Alps, indeed, though a profession, it was not generally a trade. It was the duty and the amusement of a large class of country gentlemen. It was the service by which they held their lands, and the diversion by which, in the absence of mental resources, they beguiled their leisure. But in the northern States of Italy, as we have already remarked, the growing power of the cities, where it had not exterminated this order of men, had completely changed their habits. Here, therefore, the practice of employing mercenaries became universal, at a time when it was almost unknown in other countries.

When war becomes the trade of a separate class the least dangerous course left to a government is to form that class into a standing army. It is scarcely possible that men can pass their lives in the service of one State, without feeling some interest in its greatness. Its victories are their victories. Its defeats are their defeats. The contract loses something of its mercantile character. The services of the soldier are considered as the effects of patriotic zeal, his pay as the tribute of national gratitude. To betray the power which employs him, to be even remiss in its service, are in his eyes the most atrocious and degrading of crimes.

When the princes and commonwealths of Italy began to use hired troops, their wisest course would have been to form separate military establishments. Unhappily this was not done. The mercenary warriors of the Peninsula, instead of being attached to the service of different powers, were regarded as the common property of all. The connection between the State and its defenders was reduced to the most simple and naked traffic. The adventurer brought his horse, his weapons, his strength, and his experience, into the market. Whether the King of Naples or the Duke of Milan, the Pope or the Signory of Florence, struck the bargain, was to him a matter of perfect indifference. He was for the highest wages and the longest term. When the campaign for which he had contracted was finished, there was neither law nor punctilio to prevent him from instantly turning his arms against his late masters. The soldier was altogether disjoined from the citizen and from the subject.

The natural consequences followed. Left to the conduct of men who neither loved those whom they defended, nor hated those whom they opposed, who were often bound by stronger ties to the army against which they fought than to the State which they served, who lost by the termination of the conflict, and gained by its prolongation, war completely changed its character. Every man came into the field of battle impressed with the knowledge, that, in a few days, he might be taking the pay of the power against which he was then employed, and fighting by the side of his enemies against his associates. The strongest interests and the strongest feelings concurred to mitigate the hostility of those who had lately been brethren in arms, and who might soon be brethren in arms once more. Their common profession was a bond of union not to be forgotten, even when they were engaged in the service of contending parties. Hence it was that operations, languid and indecisive beyond any recorded in history, marches and countermarches, pillaging expeditions and blockades, bloodless capitulations and equally bloodless combats, make up the military history of Italy during the course of nearly two centuries. Mighty armies fight from sunrise to sunset. A great victory is won. Thousands of prisoners are taken, and hardly a life is lost. A pitched battle seems to have been really less dangerous than an ordinary civil tumult.

Courage was now no longer necessary, even to the military character. Men grew old in camps, and acquired the highest renown by their warlike achievements, without being once required to face serious danger. The political consequences are too well known. The richest and most enlightened part of the world was left undefended to the assaults of every barbarous invader, to the brutality of Switzerland, the insolence of France, and the fierce rapacity of Aragon. The moral effects which followed from this state of things were still more remarkable.

Amongst the rude nations which lay beyond the Alps, valor was absolutely indispensable. Without it none could be eminent, few could be secure. Cowardice was, therefore, naturally considered as the foulest reproach. Among the polished Italians, enriched by commerce, governed by law, and passionately attached to literature, everything was done by supe-

riority of intelligence. Their very wars, more pacific than the peace of their neighbors, required rather civil than military qualifications. Hence, while courage was the point of honor in other countries, ingenuity became the point of honor in Italy.

From these principles were deduced, by processes strictly analogous, two opposite systems of fashionable morality. Through the greater part of Europe, the vices which peculiarly belong to timid dispositions, and which are the natural defence of weakness, fraud, and hypocrisy, have always been most disreputable. On the other hand, the excesses of haughty and daring spirits have been treated with indulgence, and even with respect. The Italians regarded with corresponding lenity those crimes which require self-command, address, quick observation, fertile invention, and profound knowledge of human nature.

Such a prince as our Henry V would have been the idol of the North. The follies of his youth, the selfish ambition of his manhood, the Lollards roasted at slow fires, the prisoners massacred on the field of battle, the expiring lease of priest-craft renewed for another century, the dreadful legacy of a causeless and hopeless war bequeathed to a people who had no interest in its event—everything is forgotten but the victory of Agincourt. Francis Sforza, on the other hand, was the model of Italian heroes. He made his employers and his rivals alike his tools. He first overpowered his open enemies by the help of faithless allies: he then armed himself against his allies with the spoils taken from his enemies. By his incomparable dexterity, he raised himself from the precarious and dependent situation of a military adventurer to the first throne of Italy. To such a man much was forgiven—hollow friendship, ungenerous enmity, violated faith. Such are the opposite errors which men commit, when their morality is not a science, but a taste, when they abandon eternal principles for accidental associations.

We have illustrated our meaning by an instance taken from history. We will select another from fiction. Othello murders his wife; he gives orders for the murder of his lieutenant; he ends by murdering himself. Yet he never loses the esteem and affection of Northern readers. His intrepid and ardent

spirit redeems everything. The unsuspecting confidence with which he listens to his adviser, the agony with which he shrinks from the thought of shame, the tempest of passion with which he commits his crimes, and the haughty fearlessness with which he avows them, give an extraordinary interest to his character. Iago, on the contrary, is the object of universal loathing. Many are inclined to suspect that Shakespeare has been seduced into an exaggeration unusual with him, and has drawn a monster who has no archetype in human nature. Now, we suspect that an Italian audience in the fifteenth century would have felt very differently. Othello would have inspired nothing but detestation and contempt. The folly with which he trusts the friendly professions of a man whose promotion he had obstructed, the credulity with which he takes unsupported assertions, and trivial circumstances, for unanswerable proofs, the violence with which he silences the exculpation till the exculpation can only aggravate his misery, would have excited the abhorrence and disgust of his spectators. The conduct of Iago they would assuredly have condemned, but they would have condemned it as we condemn that of his victim. Something of interest and respect would have mingled with their disapprobation. The readiness of the traitor's wit, the clearness of his judgment, the skill with which he penetrates the dispositions of others, and conceals his own, would have insured to him a certain portion of their esteem.

So wide was the difference between the Italians and their neighbors. A similar difference existed between the Greeks of the second century before Christ, and their masters, the Romans. The conquerors, brave and resolute, faithful to their engagements, and strongly influenced by religious feelings, were, at the same time, ignorant, arbitrary, and cruel. With the vanquished people were deposited all the art, the science, and the literature of the Western world. In poetry, in philosophy, in painting, in architecture, in sculpture, they had no rivals. Their manners were polished, their perceptions acute, their invention ready; they were tolerant, affable, humane; but of courage and sincerity they were almost utterly destitute. Every rude centurion consoled himself for his intellectual inferiority, by remarking that knowledge and taste seemed only to make men atheists, cowards, and slaves. The distinction

long continued to be strongly marked, and furnished an admirable subject for the fierce sarcasms of Juvenal.

The citizen of an Italian commonwealth was the Greek of the time of Juvenal and the Greek of the time of Pericles, joined in one. Like the former, he was timid and pliable, artful and mean. But, like the latter, he had a country. Its independence and prosperity were dear to him. If his character were degraded by some base crimes, it was, on the other hand, ennobled by public spirit and by an honorable ambition.

A vice sanctioned by the general opinion is merely a vice. The evil terminates in itself. A vice condemned by the general opinion produces a pernicious effect on the whole character. The former is a local malady, the latter a constitutional taint. When the reputation of the offender is lost, he, too, often flings the remains of his virtue after it in despair. The Highland gentleman, who, a century ago, lived by taking blackmail from his neighbors, committed the same crime for which Wild was accompanied to Tyburn by the huzzas of 200,000 people. But there can be no doubt that he was a much less depraved man than Wild. The deed for which Mrs. Brownrigg was hanged sinks into nothing when compared with the conduct of the Roman who treated the public to one hundred pairs of gladiators. Yet we should greatly wrong such a Roman if we supposed that his disposition was as cruel as that of Mrs. Brownrigg. In our own country, a woman forfeits her place in society by what, in a man, is too commonly considered as an honorable distinction, and at worst as a venial error. The consequence is notorious. The moral principle of a woman is frequently more impaired by a single lapse from virtue than that of a man by twenty years of intrigues. Classical antiquity would furnish us with instances stronger, if possible, than those to which we have referred.

We must apply this principle to the case before us. Habits of dissimulation and falsehood, no doubt, mark a man of our age and country as utterly worthless and abandoned. But it by no means follows that a similar judgment would be just in the case of an Italian in the Middle Ages. On the contrary, we frequently find those faults which we are accustomed to consider as certain indications of a mind altogether depraved, in company with great and good qualities, with generosity,

with benevolence, with disinterestedness. From such a state of society, Palamedes, in the admirable dialogue of Hume, might have drawn illustrations of his theory as striking as any of those with which Fourli furnished him. These are not, we well know, the lessons which historians are generally most careful to teach, or readers most willing to learn. But they are not therefore useless. How Philip disposed his troops at Chæronea, where Hannibal crossed the Alps, whether Mary blew up Darnley, or Siquier shot Charles XII, and the thousand other questions of the same description, are in themselves unimportant. The inquiry may amuse us, but the decision leaves us no wiser. He alone reads history aright, who, observing how powerfully circumstances influence the feelings and opinions of men, how often vices pass into virtues, and paradoxes into axioms, learns to distinguish what is accidental and transitory in human nature, from what is essential and immutable.

In this respect, no history suggests more important reflections than that of the Tuscan and Lombard commonwealths. The character of the Italian statesman seems, at first sight, a collection of contradictions, a phantom as monstrous as the portress of hell in Milton, half divinity, half snake, majestic and beautiful above, grovelling and poisonous below. We see a man whose thoughts and words have no connection with each other, who never hesitates at an oath when he wishes to seduce, who never wants a pretext when he is inclined to betray. His cruelties spring, not from the heat of blood, or the insanity of uncontrolled power, but from deep and cool meditation. His passions, like well-trained troops, are impetuous by rule, and in their most headstrong fury never forget the discipline to which they have been accustomed. His whole soul is occupied with vast and complicated schemes of ambition, yet his aspect and language exhibit nothing but philosophical moderation. Hatred and revenge eat into his heart; yet every look is a cordial smile, every gesture a familiar caress. He never excites the suspicion of his adversaries by petty provocations. His purpose is disclosed, only when it is accomplished. His face is unruffled, his speech is courteous, till vigilance is laid asleep, till a vital point is exposed, till a sure aim is taken; and then he strikes for the first and last time.

Military courage, the boast of the sottish German, of the frivolous and prating Frenchman, of the romantic and arrogant Spaniard, he neither possesses nor values. He shuns danger, not because he is insensible to shame, but because, in the society in which he lives, timidity has ceased to be shameful. To do an injury openly is, in his estimation, as wicked as to do it secretly, and far less profitable. With him the most honorable means are those which are the surest, the speediest, and the darkest. He cannot comprehend how a man should scruple to deceive those whom he does not scruple to destroy. He would think it madness to declare open hostilities against rivals whom he might stab in a friendly embrace, or poison in a consecrated wafer.

Yet this man, black with the vices which we consider as most loathsome, traitor, hypocrite, coward, assassin, was by no means destitute even of those virtues which we generally consider as indicating superior elevation of character. In civil courage, in perseverance, in presence of mind, those barbarous warriors, who were foremost in the battle or the breach, were far his inferiors. Even the dangers which he avoided with a caution almost pusillanimous never confused his perceptions, never paralyzed his inventive faculties, never wrung out one secret from his smooth tongue and his inscrutable brow. Though a dangerous enemy, and a still more dangerous accomplice, he could be a just and beneficent ruler. With so much unfairness in his policy, there was an extraordinary degree of fairness in his intellect. Indifferent to truth in the transactions of life, he was honestly devoted to truth in the researches of speculation. Wanton cruelty was not in his nature. On the contrary, where no political object was at stake, his disposition was soft and humane. The susceptibility of his nerves and the activity of his imagination inclined him to sympathize with the feelings of others, and to delight in the charities and courtesies of social life. Perpetually descending to actions which might seem to mark a mind diseased through all its faculties, he had nevertheless an exquisite sensibility, both for the natural and the moral sublime, for every graceful and every lofty conception. Habits of petty intrigue and dissimulation might have rendered him incapable of great general views, but that the expanding effect of his

philosophical studies counteracted the narrowing tendency. He had the keenest enjoyment of wit, eloquence, and poetry. The fine arts profited alike by the severity of his judgment, and by the liberality of his patronage. The portraits of some of the remarkable Italians of those times are perfectly in harmony with this description. Ample and majestic foreheads; brows strong and dark, but not frowning; eyes of which the calm, full gaze, while it expresses nothing, seems to discern everything; cheeks pale with thought and sedentary habits; lips formed with feminine delicacy, but compressed with more than masculine decision—mark out men at once enterprising and timid, men equally skilled in detecting the purposes of others, and in concealing their own, men who must have been formidable enemies and unsafe allies, but men, at the same time, whose tempers were mild and equable, and who possessed an amplitude and subtlety of intellect which would have rendered them eminent either in active or in contemplative life, and fitted them either to govern or to instruct mankind.

Every age and every nation has certain characteristic vices, which prevail almost universally, which scarcely any person scruples to avow, and which even rigid moralists but faintly censure. Succeeding generations change the fashion of their morals, with the fashion of their hats and their coaches; take some other kind of wickedness under their patronage, and wonder at the depravity of their ancestors. Nor is this all. Posterity, that high court of appeal which is never tired of eulogizing its own justice and discernment, acts on such occasions like a Roman dictator after a general mutiny. Finding the delinquents too numerous to be all punished, it selects some of them at hazard, to bear the whole penalty of an offence in which they are not more deeply implicated than those who escape. Whether decimation be a convenient mode of military execution, we know not; but we solemnly protest against the introduction of such a principle into the philosophy of history.

In the present instance, the lot has fallen on Machiavelli, a man whose public conduct was upright and honorable, whose views of morality, where they differed from those of the persons around him, seemed to have differed for the better, and whose only fault was, that, having adopted some of the max-

ims then generally received, he arranged them more luminously, and expressed them more forcibly, than any other writer.

Having now, we hope, in some degree cleared the personal character of Machiavelli, we come to the consideration of his works. As a poet, he is not entitled to a very high place. The "Decennali" are merely abstracts of the history of his own times in rhyme. The style and versification are sedulously modelled on those of Dante. But the manner of Dante, like that of every other great original poet, was suited only to his own genius, and to his own subject. The distorted and rugged diction which gives to his unearthly imagery a yet more unearthly character, and seems to proceed from a man laboring to express that which is inexpressible, is at once mean and extravagant when misemployed by an imitator. The moral poems are in every point superior. That on Fortune, in particular, and that on Opportunity exhibit both justness of thought and fertility of fancy. The Golden Ass has nothing but the name in common with the romance of Apuleius—a book which, in spite of its irregular plan and its detestable style, is among the most fascinating in the Latin language, and in which the merits of Le Sage and Radcliffe, Bunyan, and Crébillon, are singularly united. The poem of Machiavelli, which is evidently unfinished, is carefully copied from the earlier cantos of the Inferno. The writer loses himself in a wood. He is terrified by monsters and relieved by a beautiful damsel. His protectress conducts him to a large menagerie of emblematical beasts, whose peculiarities are described at length. The manner, as well as the plan, of the Divine Comedy is carefully imitated. Whole lines are transferred from it. But they no longer produce their wonted effect. Vergil advises the husbandman who removes a plant from one spot to another to mark its bearings on the cork, and to place it in the same position with regard to the different points of the heaven in which it formerly stood. A similar care is necessary in poetical transplantation. Where it is neglected we perpetually see the flowers of language which have bloomed on one soil wither on another. Yet the Golden Ass is not altogether destitute of merit. There is considerable ingenuity in the allegory, and some vivid coloring in the description.

The comedies deserve more attention. The "Mandragola," in particular, is superior to the best of Goldoni, and inferior only to the best of Molière. It is the work of a man who, if he had devoted himself to the drama, would probably have attained the highest eminence, and produced a permanent and salutary effect on the national taste. This we infer, not so much from the degree as from the kind of its excellence. There are compositions which indicate still greater talent, and which are perused with still greater delight, from which we should have drawn very different conclusions. Books quite worthless are quite harmless. The sure sign of the general decline of an art is the frequent occurrence, not of deformity, but of misplaced beauty. In general, tragedy is corrupted by eloquence, and comedy by wit.

The real object of the drama is the exhibition of human character. This, we conceive, is no arbitrary canon, originating in local and temporary associations, like those canons which regulate the number of acts in a play, or of syllables in a line. To this fundamental law every other regulation is subordinate. The situations which most signally develop character form the best plot. The mother tongue of the passions is the best style.

This principle, rightly understood, does not debar the poet from any grace of composition. There is no style in which some man may not, under some circumstances, express himself. There is, therefore, no style which the drama rejects, none which it does not occasionally require. It is in the discernment of place, of time, and of person, that the inferior artists fail. The fantastic rhapsody of Mercutio, the elaborate declamation of Antony, are, where Shakespeare has placed them, natural and pleasing. But Dryden would have made Mercutio challenge Tybalt in hyperboles as fanciful as those in which he describes the chariot of Mab. Corneille would have represented Antony as scolding and coaxing Cleopatra with all the measured rhetoric of a funeral oration.

No writers have injured the comedy of England so deeply as Congreve and Sheridan. Both were men of splendid wit and polished taste. Unhappily, they made all their characters

in their own likeness. Their works bear the same relation to the legitimate drama which a transparency bears to a painting. There are no delicate touches, no hues imperceptibly fading into each other: the whole is lighted up with a universal glare. Outlines and tints are forgotten in the common blaze which illuminates all. The flowers and fruits of the intellect abound; but it is the abundance of a jungle, not of a garden, unwholesome, bewildering, unprofitable from its very plenty, rank from its very fragrance. Every fop, every boor, every *valet,* is a man of wit. The very butts and dupes, Tattle, Witwould, Puff, Acres, outshine the whole Hotel of Rambouillet. To prove the whole system of this school erroneous, it is only necessary to apply the test which dissolved the enchanted Florimel, to place the true by the false Thalia, to contrast the most celebrated characters which have been drawn by the writers of whom we speak with the Bastard in "King John," or the Nurse in "Romeo and Juliet." It was not surely from want of wit that Shakespeare adopted so different a manner. Benedick and Beatrice throw Mirabel and Millamant into the shade. All the good sayings of the facetious hours of Absolute and Surface might have been clipped from the single character of Falstaff without being missed. It would have been easy for that fertile mind to have given Bardolph and Shallow as much wit as Prince Hal, and to have made Dogberry and Verges retort on each other in sparkling epigrams. But he knew that such indiscriminate prodigality was, to use his own admirable language, "from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was, and is, to hold, as it were, the mirror up to nature."

This digression will enable our readers to understand what we mean when we say, that, in the "Mandragola," Machiavelli has proved that he completely understood the nature of the dramatic art, and possessed talents which would have enabled him to excel in it. By the correct and vigorous delineation of human nature, it produces interest without a pleasing or skilful plot, and laughter without the least ambition of wit. The lover, not a very delicate or generous lover, and his adviser the parasite, are drawn with spirit. The hypocritical confessor is an admirable portrait. He is, if we mistake not, the

original of Father Dominic, the best comic character of Dryden. But old Nicias is the glory of the piece. We cannot call to mind anything that resembles him. The follies which Molière ridicules are those of affectation, not those of fatuity. Coxcombs and pedants, not absolute simpletons, are his game. Shakespeare has indeed a vast assortment of fools; but the precise species of which we speak is not, if we remember right, to be found there. Shallow is a fool. But his animal spirits supply, to a certain degree, the place of cleverness. His talk is to that of Sir John what soda-water is to champagne. It has the effervescence, though not the body or the flavor. Slender and Sir Andrew Aguecheek are fools, troubled with an uneasy consciousness of their folly, which, in the latter, produces meekness and docility, and in the former, awkwardness, obstinacy, and confusion. Cloten is an arrogant fool, Osric a foppish fool, Ajax a savage fool; but Nicias is, as Thersites says of Patroclus, a fool positive. His mind is occupied by no strong feeling; it takes every character, and retains none; its aspect is diversified, not by passions, but by faint and transitory semblances of passion, a mock joy, a mock fear, a mock love, a mock pride, which chase each other like shadows over its surface, and vanish as soon as they appear. He is just idiot enough to be an object, not of pity or horror, but of ridicule. He bears some resemblance to poor Calandrino, whose mishaps, as recounted by Boccaccio, have made all Europe merry for more than four centuries. He perhaps resembles still more closely Simon da Villa, to whom Bruno and Buffalmacco promised the love of the Countess Civillari. Nicias is, like Simon, of a learned profession; and the dignity with which he wears the doctoral fur renders his absurdities infinitely more grotesque. The old Tuscan is the very language for such a being. Its peculiar simplicity gives even to the most forcible reasoning and the most brilliant wit an infantine air, generally delightful, but to a foreign reader sometimes a little ludicrous. Heroes and statesmen seem to lisp when they use it. It becomes Nicias incomparably, and renders all his silliness infinitely more silly.

We may add, that the verses with which the "Mandragola" is interspersed appear to us to be the most spirited and cor-

rect of all that Machiavelli has written in metre. He seems to have entertained the same opinion, for he has introduced some of them in other places. The contemporaries of the author were not blind to the merits of this striking piece. It was acted at Florence with the greatest success. Leo X was among its admirers, and by his order it was represented at Rome.[4]

The "Clizia" is an imitation of the "Casina" of Plautus, which is itself an imitation of the lost *κληρούμενοι* of Diphilus. Plautus was, unquestionably, one of the best Latin writers; but the "Casina" is by no means one of his best plays, nor is it one which offers great facilities to an imitator. The story is as alien from modern habits of life as the manner in which it is developed from the modern fashion of composition. The lover remains in the country and the heroine in her chamber during the whole action, leaving their fate to be decided by a foolish father, a cunning mother, and two knavish servants. Michiavelli has executed his task with judgment and taste. He has accommodated the plot to a different state of society, and has very dexterously connected it with the history of his own times. The relation of the trick put on the doting old lover is exquisitely humorous. It is far superior to the corresponding passage in the Latin comedy, and scarcely yields to the account which Falstaff gives of his ducking.

Two other comedies, without titles, the one in prose, the other in verse, appear among the works of Machiavelli. The former is very short, lively enough, but of no great value. The latter we can scarcely believe to be genuine. Neither its merits nor its defects remind us of the reputed author. It was first printed in 1796, from a manuscript discovered in the celebrated library of the Strozzi. Its genuineness, if we have been rightly informed, is established solely by the comparison of hands. Our suspicions are strengthened by the circumstance, that the same manuscript contained a description of the plague of 1527, which has also, in consequence, been added to the works of Machiavelli. Of this last composition, the strongest external evidence would scarcely induce us to believe him guilty. Nothing was ever written more detestable

[4] Nothing can be more evident than that Paulus Jovius designates the "Mandragola" under the name of the "Nicias." We should not have noticed what is so perfectly obvious, were it not that this natural and palpable misnomer has led the sagacious and industrious Bayle into a gross error.

in matter and manner. The narrations, the reflections, the jokes, the lamentations, are all the very worst of their respective kinds, at once trite and affected, threadbare tinsel from the rag-fairs and Monmouth-streets of literature. A foolish schoolboy might write such a piece, and, after he had written it, think it much finer than the incomparable introduction of "The Decameron." But that a shrewd statesman, whose earliest works are characterized by manliness of thought and language, should, at near sixty years of age, descend to such puerility, is utterly inconceivable.

The little novel of "Belphegor" is pleasantly conceived, and pleasantly told. But the extravagance of the satire in some measure injures its effect. Machiavelli was unhappily married; and his wish to avenge his own cause, and that of his brethren in misfortune, carried him beyond even the license of fiction. Jonson seems to have combined some hints taken from this tale, with others from Boccaccio, in the plot of "The Devil is an Ass," a play which, though not the most highly finished of his compositions, is perhaps that which exhibits the strongest proofs of genius.

The political correspondence of Machiavelli, first published in 1767, is unquestionably genuine, and highly valuable. The unhappy circumstances in which his country was placed during the greater part of his public life gave extraordinary encouragement to diplomatic talents. From the moment that Charles VIII descended from the Alps the whole character of Italian politics was changed. The governments of the Peninsula ceased to form an independent system. Drawn from their old orbit by the attraction of the larger bodies which now approach them, they became mere satellites of France and Spain. All their disputes, internal and external, were decided by foreign influence. The contests of opposite factions were carried on, not as formerly in the Senate-house or in the market-place, but in the antechambers of Louis and Ferdinand. Under these circumstances, the prosperity of the Italian States depended far more on the ability of their foreign agents, than on the conduct of those who were intrusted with the domestic administration. The ambassador had to discharge functions far more delicate than transmitting orders of knighthood, introducing tourists, or presenting his breth-

ren with the homage of his high consideration. He was an advocate to whose management the dearest interests of his clients were intrusted, a spy clothed with an inviolable character. Instead of consulting, by a reserved manner and ambiguous style, the dignity of those whom he represented, he was to plunge into all the intrigues of the court at which he resided, to discover and flatter every weakness of the prince, and of the favorite who governed the prince, and of the lackey who governed the favorite. He was to compliment the mistress, and bribe the confessor, to panegyrize or supplicate, to laugh or weep, to accommodate himself to every caprice, to lull every suspicion, to treasure every hint, to be everything, to observe everything, to endure everything. High as the art of political intrigue had been carried in Italy, these were times which required it all.

On these arduous errands Machiavelli was frequently employed. He was sent to treat with the King of the Romans and with the Duke of Valentinois. He was twice ambassador at the Court of Rome, and thrice at that of France. In these missions, and in several others of inferior importance, he acquitted himself with great dexterity. His despatches form one of the most amusing and instructive collections extant. The narratives are clear and agreeably written, the remarks on men and things clever and judicious. The conversations are reported in a spirited and characteristic manner. We find ourselves introduced into the presence of the men who, during twenty eventful years, swayed the destinies of Europe. Their wit and their folly, their fretfulness and their merriment, are exposed to us. We are admitted to overhear their chat, and to watch their familiar gestures. It is interesting and curious to recognize, in circumstances which elude the notice of historians, the feeble violence and shallow cunning of Louis XII; the bustling insignificance of Maximilian, cursed with an impotent pruriency for renown, rash yet timid, obstinate yet fickle, always in a hurry, yet always too late; the fierce and haughty energy which gave dignity to the eccentricities of Julius; the soft and graceful manners which masked the insatiable ambition and the implacable hatred of Cæsar Borgia.

We have mentioned Cæsar Borgia. It is impossible not to pause for a moment on the name of a man in whom the politi-

cal morality of Italy was so strongly personified, partially blended with the sterner lineaments of the Spanish character. On two important occasions Machiavelli was admitted to his society—once, at the moment when Cæsar's splendid villany achieved its most signal triumph, when he caught in one snare, and crushed at one blow, all his most formidable rivals; and again when, exhausted by disease, and overwhelmed by misfortunes which no human prudence could have averted, he was the prisoner of the deadliest enemy of his house. These interviews between the greatest speculative and the greatest practical statesmen of the age are fully described in the "Correspondence," and form, perhaps, the most interesting part of it. From some passages in "The Prince," and perhaps also from some indistinct traditions, several writers have supposed a connection between those remarkable men much closer than ever existed. The envoy has even been accused of prompting the crimes of the artful and merciless tyrant. But, from the official documents, it is clear that their intercourse, though ostensibly amicable, was in reality hostile. It cannot be doubted, however, that the imagination of Machiavelli was strongly impressed, and his speculations on government colored, by the observations which he made on the singular character and equally singular fortunes of a man who, under such disadvantages, had achieved such exploits; who, when sensuality, varied through innumerable forms, could no longer stimulate his sated mind, found a more powerful and durable excitement in the intense thirst of empire and revenge; who emerged from the sloth and luxury of the Roman purple the first prince and general of the age; who, trained in an unwarlike profession, formed a gallant army out of the dregs of an unwarlike people; who, after acquiring sovereignty by destroying his enemies, acquired popularity by destroying his tools; who had begun to employ for the most salutary ends the power which he had attained by the most atrocious means; who tolerated within the sphere of his iron despotism no plunderer or oppressor but himself; and who fell at last amidst the mingled curses and regrets of a people of whom his genius had been the wonder, and might have been the salvation. Some of those crimes of Borgia which to us appear the most odious, would not, from causes which we have already con-

sidered, have struck an Italian of the fifteenth century with equal horror. Patriotic feeling also might induce Machiavelli to look with some indulgence and regret on the memory of the only leader who could have defended the independence of Italy against the confederate spoilers of Cambray.

On this subject, Machiavelli felt most strongly. Indeed, the expulsion of the foreign tyrants, and the restoration of that golden age which had preceded the irruption of Charles VIII, were projects which, at that time, fascinated all the master-spirits of Italy. The magnificent vision delighted the great but ill-regulated mind of Julius. It divided with manuscripts and sauces, painters and falcons, the attention of the frivolous Leo. It prompted the generous treason of Morone. It imparted a transient energy to the feeble mind and body of the last Sforza. It excited for one moment an honest ambition in the false heart of Pescara. Ferocity and insolence were not among the vices of the national character. To the discriminating cruelties of politicians, committed for great ends on select victims, the moral code of the Italians was too indulgent. But, though they might have recourse to barbarity as an expedient, they did not require it as a stimulant. They turned with loathing from the atrocity of the strangers who seemed to love blood for its own sake; who, not content with subjugating, were impatient to destroy; who found a fiendish pleasure in razing magnificent cities, cutting the throats of enemies who cried for quarter, or suffocating an unarmed population by thousands in the caverns to which it had fled for safety. Such were the cruelties which daily excited the terror and disgust of a people among whom, till lately, the worst that a soldier had to fear in a pitched battle was the loss of his horse and the expense of his ransom. The swinish intemperance of Switzerland; the wolfish avarice of Spain; the gross licentiousness of the French, indulged in violation of hospitality, of decency, of love itself; the wanton inhumanity which was common to all the invaders—had made them objects of deadly hatred to the inhabitants of the Peninsula. The wealth which had been accumulated during centuries of prosperity and repose was rapidly melting away. The intellectual superiority of the oppressed people only rendered them more keenly sensible of their political degradation. Literature and taste, in-

deed, still disguised with a flush of hectic loveliness and brilliancy the ravages of an incurable decay. The iron had not yet entered into the soul. The time was not yet come when eloquence was to be gagged, and reason to be hoodwinked, when the harp of the poet was to be hung on the willows of Arno, and the right hand of the painter to forget its cunning. Yet a discerning eye might even then have seen that genius and learning would not long survive the state of things from which they had sprung, and that the great men whose talents gave lustre to that melancholy period had been formed under the influence of happier days, and would leave no successors behind them. The times which shine with the greatest splendor in literary history are not always those to which the human mind is most indebted. Of this we may be convinced, by comparing the generation which follows them with that which had preceded them. The first-fruits which are reaped under a bad system often spring from seed sown under a good one. Thus it was, in some measure, with the Augustan age. Thus it was with the age of Raphael and Ariosto, of Aldus and Vida.

Machiavelli deeply regretted the misfortunes of his country, and clearly discerned the cause and the remedy. It was the military system of the Italian people which had extinguished their valor and discipline, and left their wealth an easy prey to every foreign plunderer. The secretary projected a scheme, alike honorable to his heart and to his intellect, for abolishing the use of mercenary troops, and for organizing a national militia.

The exertions which he made to effect this great object ought alone to rescue his name from obloquy. Though his situation and his habits were pacific, he studied with intense assiduity the theory of war. He made himself master of all its details. The Florentine government entered into his views. A council of war was appointed. Levies were decreed. The indefatigable minister flew from place to place in order to superintend the execution of his design. The times were, in some respects, favorable to the experiment. The system of military tactics had undergone a great revolution. The cavalry was no longer considered as forming the strength of an army. The hours which a citizen could spare from his ordi-

nary employments, though by no means sufficient to familiarize him with the exercise of a man-at-arms, might render him a useful foot-soldier. The dread of a foreign yoke, of plunder, massacre, and conflagration, might have conquered that repugnance to military pursuits which both the industry and the idleness of great towns commonly generate. For a time the scheme promised well. The new troops acquitted themselves respectably in the field. Machiavelli looked with parental rapture on the success of his plan, and began to hope that the arms of Italy might once more be formidable to the barbarians of the Tagus and the Rhine. But the tide of misfortune came on before the barriers which should have withstood it were prepared. For a time, indeed, Florence might be considered as peculiarly fortunate. Famine and sword and pestilence had devastated the fertile plains and stately cities of the Po. All the curses denounced of old against Tyre seemed to have fallen on Venice. Her merchants already stood afar off, lamenting for their great city. The time seemed near when the sea-weed should overgrow her silent Rialto, and the fisherman wash his nets in her deserted arsenal. Naples had been four times conquered and reconquered by tyrants equally indifferent to its welfare, and equally greedy for its spoils. Florence, as yet, had only to endure degradation and extortion, to submit to the mandates of foreign powers, to buy over and over again, at an enormous price, what was already justly her own, to return thanks for being wronged, and to ask pardon for being in the right. She was at length deprived of the blessings, even of this infamous and servile repose. Her military and political institutions were swept away together. The Medici returned, in the train of foreign invaders, from their long exile. The policy of Machiavelli was abandoned; and his public services were requited with poverty, imprisonment, and torture.

The fallen statesman still clung to his project with unabated ardor. With the view of vindicating it from some popular objections, and of refuting some prevailing errors on the subject of military science, he wrote his "Seven Books on the Art of War." This excellent work is in the form of a dialogue. The opinions of the writer are put into the mouth of Fabrizio Colonna, a powerful nobleman of the ecclesiastical State, and an officer of distinguished merit in the service of the King of

Spain. Colonna visits Florence on his way from Lombardy to his own domains. He is invited to meet some friends at the house of Cosimo Rucellai, an amiable and accomplished young man, whose early death Machiavelli feelingly deplores. After partaking of an elegant entertainment, they retire from the heat into the most shady recesses of the garden. Fabrizio is struck by the sight of some uncommon plants. Cosimo says, that, though rare in modern days, they are frequently mentioned by the classical authors, and that his grandfather, like many other Italians, amused himself with practising the ancient methods of gardening. Fabrizio expresses his regret that those who, in later times, affected the manners of the old Romans, should select for imitation the most trifling pursuits. This leads to a conversation on the decline of military discipline, and on the best means of restoring it. The institution of the Florentine militia is ably defended, and several improvements are suggested in the details.

The Swiss and the Spaniards were, at that time, regarded as the best soldiers in Europe. The Swiss battalion consisted of pikemen, and bore a close resemblance to the Greek phalanx. The Spaniards, like the soldiers of Rome, were armed with the sword and the shield. The victories of Flamininus and Æmilius over the Macedonian kings seem to prove the superiority of the weapons used by the legions. The same experiment had been recently tried with the same result at the battle of Ravenna, one of those tremendous days into which human folly and wickedness compress the whole devastation of a famine or a plague. In that memorable conflict, the infantry of Aragon, the old companions of Gonsalvo, deserted by all their allies, hewed a passage through the thickest of the imperial pikes, and effected an unbroken retreat, in the face of the *gendarmerie* of De Foix, and the renowned artillery of Este. Fabrizio, or rather Machiavelli, proposes to combine the two systems, to arm the foremost lines with the pike for the purpose of repulsing cavalry, and those in the rear with the sword, as being a weapon better adapted for every other purpose. Throughout the work, the author expresses the highest admiration of the military science of the ancient Romans, and the greatest contempt for the maxims which had been in vogue amongst the Italian commanders of the preceding gen-

eration. He prefers infantry to cavalry, and fortified camps to fortified towns. He is inclined to substitute rapid movements and decisive engagements for the languid and dilatory operations of his countrymen. He attaches very little importance to the invention of gunpowder. Indeed, he seems to think that it ought scarcely to produce any change in the mode of arming or of disposing troops. The general testimony of historians, it must be allowed, seems to prove that the ill-constructed and ill-served artillery of those times, though useful in a siege, was of little value on the field of battle.

Of the tactics of Machiavelli we will not venture to give an opinion, but we are certain that his book is most able and interesting. As a commentary on the history of his times, it is invaluable. The ingenuity, the grace, and the perspicuity of the style, and the eloquence and animation of particular passages, must give pleasure, even to readers who take no interest in the subject.

" The Prince " and the " Discourses on Livy " were written after the fall of the republican government. The former was dedicated to the young Lorenzo de' Medici. This circumstance seems to have disgusted the contemporaries of the writer far more than the doctrines which have rendered the name of the work odious in latter times. It was considered as an indication of political apostasy. The fact, however, seems to have been, that Machiavelli, despairing of the liberty of Florence, was inclined to support any government which might preserve her independence. The interval which separated a democracy and a despotism, Soderini and Lorenzo, seemed to vanish when compared with the difference between the former and the present state of Italy, between the security, the opulence, and the repose which she had enjoyed under its native rulers, and the misery in which she had been plunged since the fatal year in which the first foreign tyrant had descended from the Alps. The noble and pathetic exhortation with which " The Prince " concludes, shows how strongly the writer felt upon this subject.

" The Prince " traces the progress of an ambitious man, the " Discourses " the progress of an ambitious people. The same principles on which, in the former work, the elevation of an individual is explained, are applied, in the latter, to the

longer duration and more complex interest of a society. To a modern statesman the form of the "Discourses" may appear to be puerile. In truth, Livy is not a historian on whom implicit reliance can be placed, even in cases where he must have possessed considerable means of information. And the first Decade, to which Machiavelli has confined himself, is scarcely entitled to more credit than our Chronicle of British Kings who reigned before the Roman invasion. But the commentator is indebted to Livy for little more than a few texts which he might as easily have extracted from the Vulgate or "The Decameron." The whole train of thought is original.

On the peculiar immorality which has rendered "The Prince" unpopular, and which is almost equally discernible in the "Discourses" we have already given our opinion at length. We have attempted to show that it belonged rather to the age than to the man, that it was a partial taint, and by no means implied general depravity. We cannot, however, deny that it is a great blemish, and that it considerably diminishes the pleasure which, in other respects, those works must afford to every intelligent mind.

It is, indeed, impossible to conceive a more healthful and vigorous constitution of the understanding than that which these works indicate. The qualities of the active and the contemplative statesman appear to have been blended in the mind of the writer into a rare and exquisite harmony. His skill in the details of business had not been acquired at the expense of his general powers. It had not rendered his mind less comprehensive; but it had served to correct his speculations, and to impart to them that vivid and practical character which so widely distinguishes them from the vague theories of most political philosophers.

Every man who has seen the world knows that nothing is so useless as a general maxim. If it be very moral and very true, it may serve for a copy to a charity boy. If, like those of Rochefoucault, it be sparkling and whimsical, it may make an excellent motto for an essay. But few indeed of the many wise apophthegms which have been uttered, from the time of the Seven Sages of Greece to that of "Poor Richard," have prevented a single foolish action. We give the highest and the most peculiar praise to the precepts of Machiavelli when

we say that they may frequently be of real use in regulating conduct, not so much because they are more just or more profound than those which might be culled from other authors, as because they can be more readily applied to the problems of real life.

There are errors in these works. But they are errors which a writer, situated like Machiavelli, could scarcely avoid. They arise, for the most part, from a single defect which appears to us to pervade his whole system. In his political scheme, the means had been more deeply considered than the ends. The great principle, that societies and laws exist only for the purpose of increasing the sum of private happiness, is not recognized with sufficient clearness. The good of the body, distinct from the good of the members, and sometimes hardly compatible with the good of the members, seems to be the object which he proposes to himself. Of all political fallacies, this has perhaps had the widest and the most mischievous operation. The state of society in the little commonwealths of Greece, the close connection and mutual dependence of the citizens, and the severity of the laws of war, tended to encourage an opinion which, under such circumstances, could hardly be called erroneous. The interests of every individual were inseparably bound up with those of the State. An invasion destroyed his corn-fields and vineyards, drove him from his home, and compelled him to encounter all the hardships of a military life. A treaty of peace restored him to security and comfort. A victory doubled the number of his slaves. A defeat perhaps made him a slave himself. When Pericles, in the Peloponnesian war, told the Athenians, that, if their country triumphed, their private losses would speedily be repaired, but that, if their arms failed of success, every individual amongst them would probably be ruined, he spoke no more than the truth. He spoke to men whom the tribute of vanquished cities supplied with food and clothing, with the luxury of the bath and the amusements of the theatre, on whom the greatness of their country conferred rank, and before whom the members of less prosperous communities trembled; to men who, in case of a change in the public fortunes, would, at least, be deprived of every comfort and every distinction which they enjoyed. To be butchered on the smoking ruins of their city, to be dragged

in chains to a slave-market, to see one child torn from them to dig in the quarries of Sicily, and another to guard the harems of Persepolis, these were the frequent and probable consequences of national calamities. Hence, among the Greeks, patriotism became a governing principle, or rather an ungovernable passion. Their legislators and their philosophers took it for granted, that, in providing for the strength and greatness of the State, they sufficiently provided for the happiness of the people. The writers of the Roman Empire lived under despots, into whose dominion a hundred nations were melted down, and whose gardens would have covered the little commonwealths of Phlius and Platæa. Yet they continued to employ the same language, and to cant about the duty of sacrificing everything to a country to which they owed nothing.

Causes similar to those which had influenced the disposition of the Greeks operated powerfully on the less vigorous and daring character of the Italians. The Italians, like the Greeks, were members of small communities. Every man was deeply interested in the welfare of the society to which he belonged, a partaker in its wealth and its poverty, in its glory and its shame. In the age of Machiavelli this was peculiarly the case. Public events had produced an immense sum of misery to private citizens. The Northern invaders had brought want to their boards, infamy to their beds, fire to their roofs, and the knife to their throats. It was natural that a man who lived in times like these should overrate the importance of those measures by which a nation is rendered formidable to its neighbors, and undervalue those which make it prosperous within itself.

Nothing is more remarkable in the political treatises of Machiavelli than the fairness of mind which they indicate. It appears where the author is in the wrong, almost as strongly as where he is in the right. He never advances a false opinion because it is new or splendid, because he can clothe it in a happy phrase, or defend it by an ingenious sophism. His errors are at once explained by a reference to the circumstances in which he was placed. They evidently were not sought out: they lay in his way, and could scarcely be avoided. Such mistakes must necessarily be committed by early speculators in every science.

The political works of Machiavelli derive a peculiar interest from the mournful earnestness which he manifests whenever he touches on topics connected with the calamities of his native land. It is difficult to conceive any situation more painful than that of a great man, condemned to watch the lingering agony of an exhausted country, to tend it during the alternate fits of stupefaction and raving which precede its dissolution, and to see the symptoms of vitality disappear one by one, till nothing is left but coldness, darkness, and corruption. To this joyless and thankless duty was Machiavelli called. In the energetic language of the prophet, he was " mad for the sight of his eyes which he saw "—disunion in the Council, effeminacy in the camp, liberty extinguished, commerce decaying, national honor sullied, an enlightened and flourishing people given over to the ferocity of ignorant savages. Though his opinions had not escaped the contagion of that political immorality which was common among his countrymen, his natural disposition seems to have been rather stern and impetuous than pliant and artful. When the misery and degradation of Florence, and the foul outrage which he had himself sustained, recur to his mind, the smooth craft of his profession and his nation is exchanged for the honest bitterness of scorn and anger. He speaks like one sick of the calamitous times and abject people among whom his lot is cast. He pines for the strength and glory of ancient Rome, for the fasces of Brutus and the sword of Scipio, the gravity of the curule chair, and the bloody pomp of the triumphal sacrifice. He seems to be transported back to the days when 800,000 Italian warriors sprung to arms at the rumor of a Gallic invasion. He breathes all the spirit of those intrepid and haughty Senators who forgot the dearest ties of nature in the claims of public duty, who looked with disdain on the elephants and on the gold of Pyrrhus, and listened with unaltered composure to the tremendous tidings of Cannæ. Like an ancient temple deformed by the barbarous architecture of a later age, his character acquires an interest from the very circumstances which debase it. The original proportions are rendered more striking by the contrast which they present to the mean and incongruous additions.

The influence of the sentiments which we have described

was not apparent in his writings alone. His enthusiasm, barred from the career which it would have selected for itself, seems to have found a vent in desperate levity. He enjoyed a vindictive pleasure in outraging the opinions of a society which he despised. He became careless of the decencies which were expected from a man so highly distinguished in the literary and political world. The sarcastic bitterness of his conversation disgusted those who were more inclined to accuse his licentiousness than their own degeneracy, and who were unable to conceive the strength of those emotions which are concealed by the jests of the wretched, and by the follies of the wise.

The historical works of Machiavelli still remain to be considered. The life of Castruccio Castracani will occupy us for a very short time, and would scarcely have demanded our notice had it not attracted a much greater share of public attention than it deserves. Few books, indeed, could be more interesting than a careful and judicious account, from such a pen, of the illustrious Prince of Lucca, the most eminent of those Italian chiefs, who, like Pisistratus and Gelon, acquired a power felt rather than seen, and resting, not on law or on prescription, but on the public favor and on their great personal qualities. Such a work would exhibit to us the real nature of that species of sovereignty, so singular and so often misunderstood, which the Greeks denominated tyranny, and which, modified in some degree by the feudal system, reappeared in the commonwealths of Lombardy and Tuscany. But this little composition of Machiavelli is in no sense a history. It has no pretensions to fidelity. It is a trifle, and not a very successful trifle. It is scarcely more authentic than the novel of " Belphegor," and is very much duller.

The last great work of this illustrious man was the history of his native city. It was written by command of the Pope, who, as chief of the house of Medici, was at that time sovereign of Florence. The characters of Cosmo, of Piero, and of Lorenzo, are, however, treated with a freedom and impartiality equally honorable to the writer and to the patron. The miseries and humiliations of dependence, the bread which is more bitter than every other food, the stairs which are more painful than every other ascent, had not broken the spirit of

Machiavelli. The most corrupting post in a corrupting profession had not depraved the generous heart of Clement.

The history does not appear to be the fruit of much industry or research. It is unquestionably inaccurate. But it is elegant, lively, and picturesque, beyond any other in the Italian language. The reader, we believe, carries away from it a more vivid and a more faithful impression of the national character and manners than from more correct accounts. The truth is, that the book belongs rather to ancient than to modern literature. It is in the style, not of Davila and Clarendon, but of Herodotus and Tacitus. The classical histories may almost be called romances founded in fact. The relation is, no doubt, in all its principal points, strictly true. But the numerous little incidents which heighten the interest, the words, the gestures, the looks, are evidently furnished by the imagination of the author. The fashion of later times is different. A more exact narrative is given by the writer. It may be doubted whether more exact notions are conveyed to the reader. The best portraits are perhaps those in which there is a slight mixture of caricature, and we are not certain that the best histories are not those in which a little of the exaggeration of fictitious narrative is judiciously employed. Something is lost in accuracy, but much is gained in effect. The fainter lines are neglected, but the great characteristic features are imprinted on the mind forever.

The history terminates with the death of Lorenzo de' Medici. Machiavelli had, it seems, intended to continue his narrative to a later period. But his death prevented the execution of his design, and the melancholy task of recording the desolation and shame of Italy devolved on Guicciardini.

Machiavelli lived long enough to see the commencement of the last struggle for Florentine liberty. Soon after his death monarchy was finally established, not such a monarchy as that of which Cosmo had laid the foundations deep in the institutions and feelings of his countrymen, and which Lorenzo had embellished with the trophies of every science and every art, but a loathsome tyranny, proud and mean, cruel and feeble, bigoted and lascivious. The character of Machiavelli was hateful to the new masters of Italy, and those parts of his theory which were in strict accordance with their own daily

practice afforded a pretext for blackening his memory. His works were misrepresented by the learned, misconstrued by the ignorant, censured by the Church, abused with all the rancor of simulated virtue by the tools of a base government and the priests of a baser superstition. The name of the man whose genius had illuminated all the dark places of policy, and to whose patriotic wisdom an oppressed people had owed their last chance of emancipation and revenge, passed into a proverb of infamy. For more than two hundred years his bones lay undistinguished. At length an English nobleman paid the last honors to the greatest statesman of Florence. In the Church of Santa Croce a monument was erected to his memory, which is contemplated with reverence by all who can distinguish the virtues of a great mind through the corruptions of a degenerate age, and which will be approached with still deeper homage when the object to which his public life was devoted shall be attained, when the foreign yoke shall be broken, when a second Procida shall avenge the wrongs of Naples, when a happier Rienzi shall restore the good estate of Rome, when the streets of Florence and Bologna shall again resound with their ancient war-cry, "*Popolo; popolo; muoiano i tiranni!*"

MILTON

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TOWARDS the close of the year 1823, Mr. Lemon, deputy keeper of the State papers, in the course of his researches among the presses of his office met with a large Latin manuscript.[1] With it were found corrected copies of the foreign dispatches written by Milton while he filled the office of secretary, and several papers relating to the Popish Trials and the Rye House Plot. The whole was wrapped up in an envelope, superscribed, "To Mr. Skinner, Merchant." On examination the large manuscript proved to be the long lost essay on the "Doctrines of Christianity," which, according to Wood and Toland, Milton finished after the Restoration, and deposited with Cyriac Skinner. Skinner, it is well known, held the same political opinions with his illustrious friend. It is therefore probable, as Mr. Lemon conjectures, that he may have fallen under the suspicions of the government during that persecution of the Whigs which followed the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament; and that, in consequence of a general seizure of his papers, this work may have been brought to the office in which it has been found. But whatever the adventures of the manuscript may have been, no doubt can exist that it is a genuine relic of the great poet.

Mr. Sumner, who was commanded by His Majesty to edit and translate the treatise, has acquitted himself of his task in a manner honorable to his talents and to his character. His version is not, indeed, very easy or elegant; but it is entitled to the praise of clearness and fidelity. His notes abound with interesting quotations, and have the rare merit of really elucidating the text. The preface is evidently the work of a sensible

[1] "Joannis Miltoni, Angli, de Doctrinâ Christianâ libri duo posthumi. A Treatise on Christian Doctrine, compiled from the Holy Scriptures alone." By John Milton, translated from the original by Charles R. Sumner, M.A., etc., 1825.

and candid man, firm in his own religious opinions, and tolerant towards those of others.

The book itself will not add much to the fame of Milton. It is, like all his Latin works, well written, though not exactly in the style of the prize essays of Oxford and Cambridge. There is no elaborate imitation of classical antiquity, no scrupulous purity, none of the ceremonial cleanness which characterizes the diction of our academical Pharisees. The author does not attempt to polish and brighten his composition into the Ciceronian gloss and brilliancy. He does not, in short, sacrifice sense and spirit to pedantic refinements. The nature of his subject compelled him to use many words.

"That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp."

But he writes with as much ease and freedom as if Latin were his mother tongue; and, where he is least happy, his failure seems to arise from the carelessness of a native, not from the ignorance of a foreigner. We may apply to him what Denham with great felicity says of Cowley. He wears the garb, but not the clothes, of the ancients.

Throughout the volume are discernible the traces of a powerful and independent mind, emancipated from the influence of authority, and devoted to the search of truth. Milton professes to form his system from the Bible alone; and his digest of scriptural texts is certainly among the best that have appeared. But he is not always so happy in his inferences as in his citations.

Some of the heterodox doctrines which he avows seem to have excited considerable amazement, particularly his Arianism, and his theory on the subject of polygamy. Yet we can scarcely conceive that any person could have read the "Paradise Lost" without suspecting him of the former; nor do we think that any reader, acquainted with the history of his life, ought to be much startled at the latter. The opinions which he has expressed respecting the nature of the Deity, the eternity of matter, and the observation of the Sabbath, might, we think, have caused more just surprise.

But we will not go into the discussion of these points. The book, were it far more orthodox or far more heretical than it is, would not much edify or corrupt the present generation. The men of our time are not to be converted or perverted by quar-

tos. A few more days and this essay will follow the "Defensio Populi" to the dust and silence of the upper shelf. The name of its author, and the remarkable circumstances attending its publication, will secure to it a certain degree of attention. For a month or two it will occupy a few minutes of chat in every drawing-room, and a few columns in every magazine; and it will then, to borrow the elegant language of the play-bills, be withdrawn to make room for the forthcoming novelties.

We wish, however, to avail ourselves of the interest, transient as it may be, which this work has excited. The dexterous Capuchins never choose to preach on the life and miracles of a saint till they have awakened the devotional feelings of their auditors by exhibiting some relic of him—a thread of his garment, a lock of his hair, or a drop of his blood. On the same principle, we intend to take advantage of the late interesting discovery, and, while this memorial of a great and good man is still in the hands of all, to say something of his moral and intellectual qualities. Nor, we are convinced, will the severest of our readers blame us if, on an occasion like the present, we turn for a short time from the topics of the day, to commemorate, in all love and reverence, the genius and virtues of John Milton, the poet, the statesman, the philosopher, the glory of English literature, the champion and the martyr of English liberty.

It is by his poetry that Milton is best known; and it is of his poetry that we wish first to speak. By the general suffrage of the civilized world, his place has been assigned among the greatest masters of the art. His detractors, however, though outvoted, have not been silenced. There are many critics, and some of great name, who contrive in the same breath to extol the poems and to decry the poet. The works they acknowledge, considered in themselves, may be classed among the noblest productions of the human mind. But they will not allow the author to rank with those great men, who, born in the infancy of civilization, supplied by their own powers the want of instruction; and, though destitute of models themselves, bequeathed to posterity models which defy imitation. Milton, it is said, inherited what his predecessors created: he lived in an enlightened age; he received a finished education; and we must, therefore, if we would form a just estimate of his powers, make large deductions in consideration of these advantages.

We venture to say, on the contrary, paradoxical as the remark may appear, that no poet has ever had to struggle with more unfavorable circumstances than Milton. He doubted, as he has himself owned, whether he had not been born "an age too late." For this notion Johnson has thought fit to make him the butt of much clumsy ridicule. The poet, we believe, understood the nature of his art better than the critic. He knew that his poetical genius derived no advantage from the civilization which surrounded him, or from the learning which he had acquired; and he looked back with something like regret to the ruder age of simple words and vivid impressions.

We think that as civilization advances poetry almost necessarily declines. Therefore, though we fervently admire those great works of imagination which have appeared in dark ages, we do not admire them the more because they have appeared in dark ages. On the contrary, we hold that the most wonderful and splendid proof of genius is a great poem produced in a civilized age. We cannot understand why those who believe in that most orthodox article of literary faith, that the earliest poets are generally the best, should wonder at the rule as if it were the exception. Surely, the uniformity of the phenomenon indicates a corresponding uniformity in the cause.

The fact is, that common observers reason from the progress of the experimental sciences to that of the imitative arts. The improvement of the former is gradual and slow. Ages are spent in collecting materials, ages more in separating and combining them. Even when a system has been formed, there is still something to add, to alter, or to reject. Every generation enjoys the use of a vast hoard bequeathed to it by antiquity, and transmits that hoard, augmented by fresh acquisitions, to future ages. In these pursuits, therefore, the first speculators lie under great disadvantages, and, even when they fail, are entitled to praise. Their pupils, with far inferior intellectual powers, speedily surpass them in actual attainments. Every girl who has read Mrs. Marcet's little dialogues on political economy could teach Montague or Walpole many lessons in finance. Any intelligent man may now, by resolutely applying himself for a few years to mathematics, learn more than the great Newton knew after half a century of study and meditation.

But it is not thus with music, with painting, or with sculpture.

Still less is it thus with poetry. The progress of refinement rarely supplies these arts with better objects of imitation. It may indeed improve the instruments which are necessary to the mechanical operations of the musician, the sculptor, and the painter. But language, the machine of the poet, is best fitted for his purpose in its rudest state. Nations, like individuals, first perceive and then abstract. They advance from particular images to general terms. Hence the vocabulary of an enlightened society is philosophical; that of a half-civilized people is poetical.

This change in the language of men is partly the cause and partly the effect of a corresponding change in the nature of their intellectual operations, of a change by which science gains and poetry loses. Generalization is necessary to the advancement of knowledge; but particularity is indispensable to the creations of the imagination. In proportion as men know more and think more, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They therefore make better theories and worse poems. They give us vague phrases instead of images, and personified qualities instead of men. They may be better able to analyze human nature than their predecessors. But analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to portray, not to dissect. He may believe in a moral sense, like Shaftesbury; he may refer all human actions to self-interest, like Helvetius; or he may never think about the matter at all. His creed on such subjects will no more influence his poetry, properly so called, than the notions which a painter may have conceived respecting the lachrymal glands, or the circulation of the blood, will affect the tears of his Niobe, or the blushes of his Aurora. If Shakespeare had written a book on the motives of human actions, it is by no means certain that it would have been a good one. It is extremely improbable that it would have contained half so much able reasoning on the subject as is to be found in the "Fable of the Bees." But could Mandeville have created an Iago? Well as he knew how to resolve characters into their elements, would he have been able to combine those elements in such a manner as to make up a man—a real, living, individual man?

Perhaps no person can be a poet, or can even enjoy poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind, if anything which gives so much pleasure ought to be called unsoundness. By poetry

we mean not all writing in verse, nor even all good writing in verse. Our definition excludes many metrical compositions which, on other grounds, deserve the highest praise. By poetry we mean the art of employing words in such a manner as to produce an illusion on the imagination, the art of doing by means of words what the painter does by means of colors. Thus the greatest of poets has described it, in lines universally admired for the vigor and felicity of their diction, and still more valuable on account of the just notion which they convey of the art in which he excelled:—

> "As imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name."

These are the fruits of the "fine frenzy" which he ascribes to the poet—a fine frenzy, doubtless, but still a frenzy. Truth, indeed, is essential to poetry; but it is the truth of madness. The reasonings are just; but the premises are false. After the first suppositions have been made, everything ought to be consistent; but those first suppositions require a degree of credulity which almost amounts to a partial and temporary derangement of the intellect. Hence of all people children are the most imaginative. They abandon themselves without reserve to every illusion. Every image which is strongly presented to their mental eye produces on them the effect of reality. No man, whatever his sensibility may be, is ever affected by Hamlet or Lear as a little girl is affected by the story of poor Red Riding Hood. She knows that it is all false, that wolves cannot speak, that there are no wolves in England. Yet in spite of her knowledge she believes; she weeps; she trembles; she dares not go into a dark room lest she should feel the teeth of the monster at her throat. Such is the despotism of the imagination over uncultivated minds.

In a rude state of society men are children with a greater variety of ideas. It is therefore in such a state of society that we may expect to find the poetical temperament in its highest perfection. In an enlightened age there will be much intelligence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of just classification and subtle analysis, abundance of wit and eloquence,

abundance of verses, and even of good ones; but little poetry. Men will judge and compare; but they will not create. They will talk about the old poets, and comment on them, and to a certain degree enjoy them. But they will scarcely be able to conceive the effect which poetry produced on their ruder ancestors—the agony, the ecstasy, the plenitude of belief. The Greek Rhapsodists, according to Plato, could scarce recite Homer without falling into convulsions. The Mohawk hardly feels the scalping knife while he shouts his death-song. The power which the ancient bards of Wales and Germany exercised over their auditors seems to modern readers almost miraculous. Such feelings are very rare in a civilized community, and most rare among those who participate most in its improvements. They linger longest among the peasantry.

Poetry produces an illusion on the eye of the mind, as a magic lantern produces an illusion on the eye of the body. And, as the magic lantern acts best in a dark room, poetry effects its purpose most completely in a dark age. As the light of knowledge breaks in upon its exhibitions, as the outlines of certainty become more and more definite, and the shades of probability more and more distinct, the hues and lineaments of the phantoms which the poet calls up grow fainter and fainter. We cannot unite the incompatible advantages of reality and deception, the clear discernment of truth, and the exquisite enjoyment of fiction.

He who, in an enlightened and literary society, aspires to be a great poet, must first become a little child. He must take to pieces the whole web of his mind. He must unlearn much of that knowledge which has perhaps constituted hitherto his chief title to superiority. His very talents will be a hinderance to him. His difficulties will be proportioned to his proficiency in the pursuits which are fashionable among his contemporaries; and that proficiency will in general be proportioned to the vigor and activity of his mind. And it is well if, after all his sacrifices and exertions, his works do not resemble a lisping man or a modern ruin. We have seen in our own time great talents, intense labor, and long meditation employed in this struggle against the spirit of the age, and employed, we will not say absolutely in vain, but with dubious success and feeble applause.

If these reasonings be just, no poet has ever triumphed over

greater difficulties than Milton. He received a learned education; he was a profound and elegant classical scholar; he had studied all the mysteries of Rabbinical literature; he was intimately acquainted with every language of modern Europe from which either pleasure or information was then to be derived. He was perhaps the only great poet of later times who has been distinguished by the excellence of his Latin verse. The genius of Petrarch was scarcely of the first order; and his poems in the ancient language, though much praised by those who have never read them, are wretched compositions. Cowley, with all his admirable wit and ingenuity, had little imagination; nor indeed do we think his classical diction comparable to that of Milton. The authority of Johnson is against us on this point. But Johnson had studied the bad writers of the middle ages till he had become utterly insensible to the Augustan elegance and was as ill qualified to judge between two Latin styles as a habitual drunkard to set up for a wine taster.

Versification in a dead language is an exotic, a far-fetched, costly, sickly imitation of that which elsewhere may be found in healthful and spontaneous perfection. The soils on which this rarity flourishes are in general as ill suited to the production of vigorous native poetry as the flower-pots of a hothouse to the growth of oaks. That the author of the "Paradise Lost" should have written the "Epistle to Manso" was truly wonderful. Never before were such marked originality and such exquisite mimicry found together. Indeed, in all the Latin poems of Milton, the artificial manner indispensable to such works is admirably preserved, while, at the same time, his genius gives to them a peculiar charm, an air of nobleness and freedom, which distinguishes them from all other writings of the same class. They remind us of the amusements of those angelic warriors who composed the cohort of Gabriel:—

> "About him exercised heroic games
> The unarmed youth of heaven; but nigh at hand
> Celestial armory, shields, helms, and spears,
> Hung high, with diamond flaming and with gold."

We cannot look upon the sportive exercises for which the genius of Milton ungirds itself without catching a glimpse of the gorgeous and terrible panoply which it is accustomed to wear.

The strength of his imagination triumphed over every obstacle. So intense and ardent was the fire of his mind, that it not only was not suffocated beneath the weight of fuel, but penetrated the whole superincumbent mass with its own heat and radiance.

It is not our intention to attempt anything like a complete examination of the poetry of Milton. The public has long been agreed as to the merit of the most remarkable passages, the incomparable harmony of the numbers, and the excellence of that style which no rival has been able to equal and no parodist to degrade, which display in their highest perfection the idiomatic powers of the English tongue, and to which every ancient and every modern language has contributed something of grace, of energy, or of music. In the vast field of criticism on which we are entering innumerable reapers have already put their sickles. Yet the harvest is so abundant that the negligent search of a straggling gleaner may be rewarded with a sheaf.

The most striking characteristic of the poetry of Milton is the extreme remoteness of the associations by means of which it acts on the reader. Its effect is produced, not so much by what it expresses, as by what it suggests; not so much by the ideas which it directly conveys, as by other ideas which are connected with them. He electrifies the mind through conductors. The most unimaginative man must understand the Iliad. Homer gives him no choice, and requires from him no exertion, but takes the whole upon himself, and sets the images in so clear a light that it is impossible to be blind to them. The works of Milton cannot be comprehended or enjoyed unless the mind of the reader coöperate with that of the writer. He does not paint a finished picture, or play for a mere passive listener. He sketches, and leaves others to fill up the outline. He strikes the keynote, and expects his hearer to make out the melody.

We often hear of the magical influence of poetry. The expression in general means nothing; but, applied to the writings of Milton, it is most appropriate. His poetry acts like an incantation. Its merit lies less in its obvious meaning than in its occult power. There would seem, at first sight, to be no more in his words than in other words. But they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced, than the past is present and the distant near. New forms of beauty start at

once into existence, and all the burial-places of the memory give up their dead. Change the structure of the sentence; substitute one synonym for another, and the whole effect is destroyed. The spell loses its power; and he who should then hope to conjure with it would find himself as much mistaken as Cassim in the Arabian tale, when he stood crying, "Open wheat," "Open barley," to the door which obeyed no sound but "Open sesame." The miserable failure of Dryden in his attempt to translate into his own diction some parts of the "Paradise Lost" is a remarkable instance of this.

In support of these observations we may remark that scarcely any passages in the poems of Milton are more generally known, or more frequently repeated, than those which are little more than muster-rolls of names. They are not always more appropriate or more melodious than other names. But they are charmed names. Every one of them is the first link in a long chain of associated ideas. Like the dwelling-place of our infancy revisited in manhood, like the song of our country heard in a strange land, they produce upon us an effect wholly independent of their intrinsic value. One transports us back to a remote period of history. Another places us among the novel scenes and manners of a distant region. A third evokes all the dear classical recollections of childhood—the schoolroom, the dog-eared Vergil, the holiday, and the prize. A fourth brings before us the splendid phantoms of chivalrous romance—the trophied lists, the embroidered housings, the quaint devices, the haunted forests, the enchanted gardens, the achievements of enamoured knights, and the smiles of rescued princesses.

In none of the works of Milton is his peculiar manner more happily displayed than in the "Allegro" and the "Penseroso." It is impossible to conceive that the mechanism of language can be brought to a more exquisite degree of perfection. These poems differ from others as ottar of roses differs from ordinary rose-water, the close-packed essence from the thin, diluted mixture. They are, indeed, not so much poems as collections of hints, from each of which the reader is to make out a poem for himself. Every epithet is a text for a stanza.

The "Comus" and the "Samson Agonistes" are works which, though of very different merit, offer some marked points of resemblance. Both are lyric poems in the form of plays.

There are, perhaps, no two kinds of composition so essentially dissimilar as the drama and the ode. The business of the dramatist is to keep himself out of sight, and to let nothing appear but his characters. As soon as he attracts notice to his personal feelings, the illusion is broken. The effect is as unpleasant as that which is produced on the stage by the voice of a prompter or the entrance of a scene-shifter. Hence it was that the tragedies of Byron were his least successful performances. They resemble those pasteboard pictures invented by the friend of children, Mr. Newberry, in which a single movable head goes round twenty different bodies, so that the same face looks out upon us, successively, from the uniform of a hussar, the furs of a judge, and the rags of a beggar. In all the characters—patriots and tyrants, haters and lovers—the frown and sneer of Harold were discernible in an instant. But this species of egotism, though fatal to the drama, is the inspiration of the ode. It is the part of the lyric poet to abandon himself, without reserve, to his own emotions.

Between these hostile elements many great men have endeavored to effect an amalgamation, but never with complete success. The Greek drama, on the model of which the "Samson" was written, sprang from the ode. The dialogue was ingrafted on the chorus, and naturally partook of its character. The genius of the greatest of the Athenian dramatists coöperated with the circumstances under which tragedy made its first appearance. Æschylus was, head and heart, a lyric poet. In his time the Greeks had far more intercourse with the East than in the days of Homer; and they had not yet acquired that immense superiority in war, in science, and in the arts, which, in the following generation, led them to treat the Asiatics with contempt. From the narrative of Herodotus it should seem that they still looked up, with the veneration of disciples, to Egypt and Assyria. At this period, accordingly, it was natural that the literature of Greece should be tinctured with the Oriental style. And that style, we think, is discernible in the works of Pindar and Æschylus. The latter often reminds us of the Hebrew writers. The Book of Job, indeed, in conduct and diction, bears a considerable resemblance to some of his dramas. Considered as plays, his works are absurd; considered as choruses, they are above all praise. If, for instance, we examine the address of

Clytemnestra to Agamemnon on his return, or the description of the seven Argive chiefs, by the principles of dramatic writing, we shall instantly condemn them as monstrous. But if we forget the characters, and think only of the poetry, we shall admit that it has never been surpassed in energy and magnificence. Sophocles made the Greek drama as dramatic as was consistent with its original form. His portraits of men have a sort of similarity; but it is the similarity not of a painting, but of a bas-relief. It suggests a resemblance; but it does not produce an illusion. Euripides attempted to carry the reform further. But it was a task far beyond his powers, perhaps beyond any powers. Instead of correcting what was bad, he destroyed what was excellent. He substituted crutches for stilts, bad sermons for good odes.

Milton, it is well known, admired Euripides highly; much more highly than, in our opinion, Euripides deserved. Indeed, the caresses which this partiality leads our countryman to bestow on "sad Electra's poet," sometimes remind us of the beautiful Queen of Fairyland kissing the long ears of Bottom. At all events, there can be no doubt that this veneration for the Athenian, whether just or not, was injurious to the "Samson Agonistes." Had Milton taken Æschylus for his model, he would have given himself up to the lyric inspiration, and poured out profusely all the treasures of his mind, without bestowing a thought on those dramatic proprieties which the nature of the work rendered it impossible to preserve. In the attempt to reconcile things in their own nature inconsistent, he has failed, as everyone else must have failed. We cannot identify ourselves with the characters, as in a good play. We cannot identify ourselves with the poet, as in a good ode. The conflicting ingredients, like an acid and an alkali mixed, neutralize each other. We are by no means insensible to the merits of this celebrated piece, to the severe dignity of the style, the graceful and pathetic solemnity of the opening speech, or the wild and barbaric melody which gives so striking an effect to the choral passages. But we think it, we confess, the least successful effort of the genius of Milton.

The "Comus" is framed on the model of the Italian masque, as the "Samson" is framed on the model of the Greek tragedy. It is certainly the noblest performance of the kind which exists

in any language. It is as far superior to the "Faithful Shepherdess" as the "Faithful Shepherdess" is to the "Aminta," or the "Aminta" to the "Pastor Fido." It was well for Milton that he had here no Euripides to mislead him. He understood and loved the literature of modern Italy. But he did not feel for it the same veneration which he entertained for the remains of Athenian and Roman poetry, consecrated by so many lofty and endearing recollections. The faults, moreover, of his Italian predecessors were of a kind to which his mind had a deadly antipathy. He could stoop to a plain style, sometimes even to a bald style; but false brilliancy was his utter aversion. His Muse had no objection to a russet attire; but she turned with disgust from the finery of Guarini, as tawdry and as paltry as the rags of a chimney-sweeper on May Day. Whatever ornaments she wears are of massive gold, not only dazzling to the sight, but capable of standing the severest test of the crucible.

Milton attended in the "Comus" to the distinction which he afterwards neglected in the "Samson." He made his masque what it ought to be, essentially lyrical, and dramatic only in semblance. He has not attempted a fruitless struggle against a defect inherent in the nature of that species of composition; and he has therefore succeeded, wherever success was not impossible. The speeches must be read as majestic soliloquies; and he who so reads them will be enraptured with their eloquence, their sublimity, and their music. The interruptions of the dialogue, however, impose a constraint upon the writer, and break the illusion of the reader. The finest passages are those which are lyric in form as well as in spirit. "I should much commend," says the excellent Sir Henry Wotton in a letter to Milton, "the tragical part, if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Dorique delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto, I must plainly confess to you, I have seen yet nothing parallel in our language." The criticism was just. It is when Milton escapes from the shackles of the dialogue, when he is discharged from the labor of uniting two incongruous styles, when he is at liberty to indulge his choral raptures without reserve, that he rises even above himself. Then, like his own Good Genius bursting from the earthly form and weeds

of Thyrsis, he stands forth in celestial freedom and beauty; he seems to cry exultingly—

> "Now my task is smoothly done,
> I can fly, or I can run,"

to skim the earth, to soar above the clouds, to bathe in the elysian dew of the rainbow, and to inhale the balmy smells of nard and cassia, which the musky wings of the zephyr scatter through the cedared alleys of the Hesperides.

There are several of the minor poems of Milton on which we would willingly make a few remarks. Still more willingly would we enter into a detailed examination of that admirable poem, the "Paradise Regained," which, strangely enough, is scarcely ever mentioned except as an instance of the blindness of the parental affection which men of letters bear towards the offspring of their intellects. That Milton was mistaken in preferring this work, excellent as it is, to the "Paradise Lost," we readily admit. But we are sure that the superiority of the "Paradise Lost" to the "Paradise Regained" is not more decided than the superiority of the "Paradise Regained" to every poem which has since made its appearance. Our limits, however, prevent us from discussing the point at length. We hasten on to that extraordinary production which the general suffrage of critics has placed in the highest class of human compositions.

The only poem of modern times which can be compared with the "Paradise Lost" is the "Divine Comedy." The subject of Milton, in some points, resembled that of Dante; but he has treated it in a widely different manner. We cannot, we think, better illustrate our opinion respecting our own great poet, than by contrasting him with the father of Tuscan literature.

The poetry of Milton differs from that of Dante as the hieroglyphics of Egypt differed from the picture-writing of Mexico. The images which Dante employs speak for themselves; they stand simply for what they are. Those of Milton have a signification which is often discernible only to the initiated. Their value depends less on what they directly represent than on what they remotely suggest. However strange, however grotesque, may be the appearance which Dante undertakes to describe, he never shrinks from describing it. He gives us the shape, the

color, the sound, the smell, the taste; he counts the numbers; he measures the size. His similes are the illustrations of a traveller. Unlike those of other poets, and especially of Milton, they are introduced in a plain, businesslike manner; not for the sake of any beauty in the objects from which they are drawn; not for the sake of any ornament which they may impart to the poem; but simply in order to make the meaning of the writer as clear to the reader as it is to himself. The ruins of the precipice which led from the sixth to the seventh circle of hell were like those of the rock which fell into the Adige on the south of Trent. The cataract of Phlegethon was like that of Aqua Cheta at the monastery of St. Benedict. The place where the heretics were confined in burning tombs resembled the vast cemetery of Arles.

Now let us compare with the exact details of Dante the dim intimations of Milton. We will cite a few examples. The English poet has never thought of taking the measure of Satan. He gives us merely a vague idea of vast bulk. In one passage the fiend lies stretched out, huge in length, floating many a rood, equal in size to the earthborn enemies of Jove, or to the sea monster which the mariner mistakes for an island. When he addresses himself to battle against the guardian angels, he stands like Teneriffe or Atlas: his stature reaches the sky. Contrast with these descriptions the lines in which Dante has described the gigantic spectre of Nimrod. "His face seemed to me as long and as broad as the ball of St. Peter's at Rome; and his other limbs were in proportion; so that the bank, which concealed him from the waist downwards, nevertheless showed so much of him, that three tall Germans would in vain have attempted to reach to his hair." We are sensible that we do no justice to the admirable style of the Florentine poet. But Mr. Cary's translation is not at hand; and our version, however rude, is sufficient to illustrate our meaning.

Once more, compare the lazar house in the eleventh book of the "Paradise Lost" with the last ward of Malebolge in Dante. Milton avoids the loathsome details, and takes refuge in indistinct but solemn and tremendous imagery: Despair hurrying from couch to couch to mock the wretches with his attendance; Death shaking his dart over them, but, in spite of supplications, delaying to strike. What says Dante? "There was such a moan

there as there would be if all the sick who, between July and September, are in the hospitals of Valdichiana, and of the Tuscan swamps, and of Sardinia, were in one pit together; and such a stench was issuing forth as is wont to issue from decayed limbs."

We will not take upon ourselves the invidious office of settling precedency between two such writers. Each in his own department is incomparable; and each, we may remark, has wisely, or fortunately, taken a subject adapted to exhibit his peculiar talent to the greatest advantage. The "Divine Comedy" is a personal narrative. Dante is the eyewitness and earwitness of that which he relates. He is the very man who has heard the tormented spirits crying out for the second death; who has read the dusky characters on the portal within which there is no hope; who has hidden his face from the terrors of the Gorgon; who has fled from the hooks and the seething pitch of Barbariccia and Draghignazzo. His own hands have grasped the shaggy sides of Lucifer. His own feet have climbed the mountain of expiation. His own brow has been marked by the purifying angel. The reader would throw aside such a tale in incredulous disgust, unless it were told with the strongest air of veracity; with a sobriety even in its horrors; with the greatest precision and multiplicity in its details. The narrative of Milton in this respect differs from that of Dante, as the adventures of Amadis differ from those of Gulliver. The author of "Amadis" would have made his book ridiculous if he had introduced those minute particulars which give such a charm to the work of Swift; the nautical observations, the affected delicacy about names, the official documents transcribed at full length, and all the unmeaning gossip and scandal of the court, springing out of nothing, and tending to nothing. We are not shocked at being told that a man who lived, nobody knows when, saw many very strange sights, and we can easily abandon ourselves to the illusion of the romance. But when Lemuel Gulliver, surgeon, resident at Rotherhithe, tells us of pygmies and giants, flying islands, and philosophizing horses, nothing but such circumstantial touches could produce for a single moment a deception on the imagination.

Of all the poets who have introduced into their works the agency of supernatural beings, Milton has succeeded best. Here

Dante decidedly yields to him; and as this is a point on which many rash and ill-considered judgments have been pronounced, we feel inclined to dwell on it a little longer. The most fatal error which a poet can possibly commit in the management of his machinery is that of attempting to philosophize too much. Milton has been often censured for ascribing to spirits many functions of which spirits must be incapable. But these objections, though sanctioned by eminent names, originate, we venture to say, in profound ignorance of the art of poetry.

What is spirit? What are our own minds, the portion of spirit with which we are best acquainted? We observe certain phenomena. We cannot explain them into material causes. We therefore infer that there exists something which is not material. But of this something we have no idea. We can define it only by negatives. We can reason about it only by symbols. We use the word, but we have no image of the thing; and the business of poetry is with images, and not with words. The poet uses words indeed; but they are merely the instruments of his art, not its objects. They are the materials which he is to dispose in such a manner as to present a picture to the mental eye. And if they are not so disposed, they are no more entitled to be called poetry than a bale of canvas and a box of colors to be called a painting.

Logicians may reason about abstractions. But the great mass of men must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude in all ages and nations to idolatry can be explained on no other principle. The first inhabitants of Greece, there is reason to believe, worshipped one invisible Deity. But the necessity of having something more definite to adore produced, in a few centuries, the innumerable crowd of gods and goddesses. In like manner the ancient Persians thought it impious to exhibit the Creator under a human form. Yet even these transferred to the sun the worship which, in speculation, they considered due only to the Supreme Mind. The history of the Jews is the record of a continued struggle between pure Theism, supported by the most terrible sanctions, and the strangely fascinating desire of having some visible and tangible object of adoration. Perhaps none of the secondary causes which Gibbon has assigned for the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world, while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a proselyte,

operated more powerfully than this feeling. God, the uncreated, the incomprehensible, the invisible, attracted few worshippers. A philosopher might admire so noble a conception; but the crowd turned away in disgust from words which presented no image to their minds. It was before Deity, embodied in a human form, walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the cross, that the prejudices of the synagogue, and the doubts of the academy, and the pride of the portico, and the fasces of the lictor, and the swords of thirty legions, were humbled in the dust. Soon after Christianity had achieved its triumph, the principle which had assisted it began to corrupt it. It became a new paganism. Patron saints assumed the offices of household gods. St. George took the place of Mars. St. Elmo consoled the mariner for the loss of Castor and Pollux. The Virgin Mother and Cecilia succeeded to Venus and the Muses. The fascination of sex and loveliness was again joined to that of celestial dignity; and the homage of chivalry was blended with that of religion. Reformers have often made a stand against these feelings; but never with more than apparent and partial success. The men who demolished the images in cathedrals have not always been able to demolish those which were enshrined in their minds. It would not be difficult to show that in politics the same rule holds good. Doctrines, we are afraid, must generally be embodied before they can excite a strong public feeling. The multitude is more easily interested for the most unmeaning badge, or the most insignificant name, than for the most important principle.

From these considerations, we infer that no poet who should affect that metaphysical accuracy for the want of which Milton has been blamed, would escape a disgraceful failure. Still, however, there was another extreme which, though far less dangerous, was also to be avoided. The imaginations of men are in a great measure under the control of their opinions. The most exquisite art of poetical coloring can produce no illusion when it is employed to represent that which is at once perceived to be incongruous and absurd. Milton wrote in an age of philosophers and theologians. It was necessary, therefore, for him to abstain from giving such a shock to their understandings as might break the charm which it was his object to throw over

their imaginations. This is the real explanation of the indistinctness and inconsistency with which he has often been reproached. Dr. Johnson acknowledges that it was absolutely necessary that the spirits should be clothed with material forms. "But," says he, "the poet should have secured the consistency of his system by keeping immateriality out of sight, and seducing the reader to drop it from his thoughts." This is easily said; but what if Milton could not seduce his readers to drop immateriality from their thoughts? What if the contrary opinion had taken so full a possession of the minds of men as to leave no room even for the half belief which poetry requires? Such we suspect to have been the case. It was impossible for the poet to adopt altogether the material or the immaterial system. He therefore took his stand on the debatable ground. He left the whole in ambiguity. He has doubtless, by so doing, laid himself open to the charge of inconsistency. But, though philosophically in the wrong, we cannot but believe that he was poetically in the right. This task, which almost any other writer would have found impracticable, was easy to him. The peculiar art which he possessed of communicating his meaning circuitously through a long succession of associated ideas, and of intimating more than he expressed, enabled him to disguise those incongruities which he could not avoid.

Poetry which relates to the beings of another world ought to be at once mysterious and picturesque. That of Milton is so. That of Dante is picturesque, indeed, beyond any that ever was written. Its effect approaches to that produced by the pencil or the chisel. But it is picturesque to the exclusion of all mystery. This is a fault on the right side, a fault inseparable from the plan of Dante's poem, which, as we have already observed, rendered the utmost accuracy of description necessary. Still it is a fault. The supernatural agents excite an interest; but it is not the interest which is proper to supernatural agents. We feel that we could talk to the ghosts and demons, without any emotion of unearthly awe. We could, like Don Juan, ask them to supper, and eat heartily in their company. Dante's angels are good men with wings. His devils are spiteful, ugly executioners. His dead men are merely living men in strange situations. The scene which passes between the poet and Farinata is justly celebrated. Still, Farinata in the burning tomb is

exactly what Farinata would have been at an *auto da fé*. Nothing can be more touching than the first interview of Dante and Beatrice. Yet what is it but a lovely woman chiding, with sweet, austere composure, the lover for whose affection she is grateful, but whose vices she reprobates? The feelings which give the passage its charm would suit the streets of Florence as well as the summit of the Mount of Purgatory.

The spirits of Milton are unlike those of almost all other writers. His fiends, in particular, are wonderful creations. They are not metaphysical abstractions. They are not wicked men. They are not ugly beasts. They have no horns, no tails, none of the fee-faw-fum of Tasso and Klopstock. They have just enough in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings. Their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men, but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions, and veiled in mysterious gloom.

Perhaps the gods and demons of Æschylus may best bear a comparison with the angels and devils of Milton. The style of the Athenian had, as we have remarked, something of the Oriental character; and the same peculiarity may be traced in his mythology. It has nothing of the amenity and elegance which we generally find in the superstitions of Greece. All is rugged, barbaric, and colossal. The legends of Æschylus seem to harmonize less with the fragrant groves and graceful porticos in which his countrymen paid their vows to the God of Light and Goddess of Desire, than with those huge and grotesque labyrinths of eternal granite in which Egypt enshrined her mystic Osiris, or in which Hindostan still bows down to her seven-headed idols. His favorite gods are those of the elder generation, the sons of heaven and earth, compared with whom Jupiter himself was a stripling and an upstart—the gigantic Titans, and the inexorable Furies. Foremost among his creations of this class stands Prometheus, half fiend, half redeemer, the friend of man, the sullen and implacable enemy of heaven. Prometheus bears undoubtedly a considerable resemblance to the Satan of Milton. In both we find the same impatience of control, the same ferocity, the same unconquerable pride. In both characters, also, are mingled, though in very different proportions, some kind and generous feelings. Prometheus, however, is hardly superhuman enough. He talks too much of his chains

and his uneasy posture; he is rather too much depressed and agitated. His resolution seems to depend on the knowledge which he possesses that he holds the fate of his torturer in his hands, and that the hour of his release will surely come. But Satan is a creature of another sphere. The might of his intellectual nature is victorious over the extremity of pain. Amidst agonies which cannot be conceived without horror, he deliberates, resolves, and even exults. Against the sword of Michael, against the thunder of Jehovah, against the flaming lake, and the marl burning with solid fire, against the prospect of an eternity of unintermitted misery, his spirit bears up unbroken, resting on its own innate energies, requiring no support from anything external, nor even from hope itself.

To return for a moment to the parallel which we have been attempting to draw between Milton and Dante, we would add that the poetry of these great men has in a considerable degree taken its character from their moral qualities. They are not egotists. They rarely obtrude their idiosyncrasies on their readers. They have nothing in common with those modern beggars for fame, who extort a pittance from the compassion of the inexperienced by exposing the nakedness and sores of their minds. Yet it would be difficult to name two writers whose works have been more completely, though undesignedly, colored by their personal feelings.

The character of Milton was peculiarly distinguished by loftiness of spirit; that of Dante by intensity of feeling. In every line of the "Divine Comedy" we discern the asperity which is produced by pride struggling with misery. There is perhaps no work in the world so deeply and uniformly sorrowful. The melancholy of Dante was no fantastic caprice. It was not, as far as at this distance of time can be judged, the effect of external circumstances. It was from within. Neither love nor glory, neither the conflicts of earth nor the hope of heaven, could dispel it. It turned every consolation and every pleasure into its own nature. It resembled that noxious Sardinian soil of which the intense bitterness is said to have been perceptible even in its honey. His mind was, in the noble language of the Hebrew poet, "a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and where the light was as darkness." The gloom of his character discolors all the passions of men, and all the face of nature, and

tinges with its own livid hue the flowers of Paradise and the glories of the eternal throne. All the portraits of him are singularly characteristic. No person can look on the features, noble even to ruggedness, the dark furrows of the cheek, the haggard and woful stare of the eye, the sullen and contemptuous curve of the lip, and doubt that they belong to a man too proud and too sensitive to be happy.

Milton was, like Dante, a statesman and a lover; and, like Dante, he had been unfortunate in ambition and in love. He had survived his health and his sight, the comforts of his home, and the prosperity of his party. Of the great men by whom he had been distinguished at his entrance into life, some had been taken away from the evil to come; some had carried into foreign climates their unconquerable hatred of oppression; some were pining in dungeons; and some had poured forth their blood on scaffolds. Venal and licentious scribblers, with just sufficient talent to clothe the thoughts of a pander in the style of a bell-man, were now the favorite writers of the sovereign and of the public. It was a loathsome herd, which could be compared to nothing so filthy as to the rabble of "Comus," grotesque monsters, half bestial, half human, dropping with wine, bloated with gluttony, and reeling in obscene dances. Amidst these that fair Muse was placed, like the chaste lady of the masque, lofty, spotless, and serene, to be chattered at, and pointed at, and grinned at, by the whole rout of satyrs and goblins. If ever despondency and asperity could be excused in any man, they might have been excused in Milton. But the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to disturb his sedate and majestic patience. His spirits do not seem to have been high, but they were singularly equable. His temper was serious, perhaps stern; but it was a temper which no sufferings could render sullen or fretful. Such as it was when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels, in the prime of health and manly beauty, loaded with literary distinctions, and glowing with patriotic hopes; such it continued to be when, after having experienced every calamity which is incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless, and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die.

Hence it was, that, though he wrote the "Paradise Lost" at a time of life when images of beauty and tenderness are in general beginning to fade, even from those minds in which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the physical and in the moral world. Neither Theocritus nor Ariosto had a finer or a more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects, or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the juice of summer fruits, and the coolness of shady fountains. His conception of love unites all the voluptuousness of the Oriental harem, and all the gallantry of the chivalric tournament, with all the pure and quiet affection of an English fireside. His poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells, beautiful as fairyland, are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche.

Traces, indeed, of the peculiar character of Milton may be found in all his works; but it is most strongly displayed in the sonnets. Those remarkable poems have been undervalued by critics who have not understood their nature. They have no epigrammatic point. There is none of the ingenuity of Filicaja in the thought, none of the hard and brilliant enamel of Petrarch in the style. They are simple but majestic records of the feelings of the poet; as little tricked out for the public eye as his diary would have been. A victory, an expected attack upon the city, a momentary fit of depression or exultation, a jest thrown out against one of his books, a dream which for a short time restored to him that beautiful face over which the grave had closed forever, led him to musings which, without efforts, shaped themselves into verse. The unity of sentiment and severity of style which characterize these little pieces remind us of the Greek anthology, or perhaps still more of the Collects of the English liturgy. The noble poem on the massacres of Piedmont is strictly a collect in verse.

The sonnets are more or less striking, according as the occasions which gave birth to them are more or less interesting. But they are, almost without exception, dignified by a sobriety and greatness of mind to which we know not where to look for a parallel. It would, indeed, be scarcely safe to draw any de-

cided inferences as to the character of a writer from passages directly egotistical. But the qualities which we have ascribed to Milton, though perhaps most strongly marked in those parts of his works which treat of his personal feelings, are distinguishable in every page, and impart to all his writings, prose and poetry, English, Latin, and Italian, a strong family likeness.

His public conduct was such as was to be expected from a man of a spirit so high and of an intellect so powerful. He lived at one of the most memorable eras in the history of mankind; at the very crisis of the great conflict between Oromasdes and Arimanes, liberty and despotism, reason and prejudice. That great battle was fought for no single generation, for no single land. The destinies of the human race were staked on the same cast with the freedom of the English people. Then were first proclaimed those mighty principles which have since worked their way into the depths of the American forests, which have roused Greece from the slavery and degradation of two thousand years, and which, from one end of Europe to the other, have kindled an unquenchable fire in the hearts of the oppressed, and loosed the knees of the oppressors with an unwonted fear.

Of those principles, then struggling for their infant existence, Milton was the most devoted and eloquent literary champion. We need not say how much we admire his public conduct. But we cannot disguise from ourselves that a large portion of his countrymen still think it unjustifiable. The civil war, indeed, has been more discussed, and is less understood, than any event in English history. The friends of liberty labored under the disadvantage of which the lion in the fable complained so bitterly. Though they were the conquerors, their enemies were the painters. As a body, the Roundheads had done their utmost to decry and ruin literature; and literature was even with them, as, in the long run, it always is with its enemies. The best book on their side of the question is the charming narrative of Mrs. Hutchinson. May's "History of the Parliament" is good; but it breaks off at the most interesting crisis of the struggle. The performance of Ludlow is foolish and violent; and most of the later writers who have espoused the same cause, Oldmixon, for instance, and Catherine Macaulay, have, to say the least, been more distinguished by zeal than either by candor

or by skill. On the other side are the most authoritative and the most popular historical works in our language—that of Clarendon and that of Hume. The former is not only ably written and full of valuable information, but has also an air of dignity and sincerity which makes even the prejudices and errors with which it abounds respectable. Hume, from whose fascinating narrative the great mass of the reading public are still contented to take their opinions, hated religion so much that he hated liberty for having been allied with religion, and has pleaded the cause of tyranny with the dexterity of an advocate, while affecting the impartiality of a judge.

The public conduct of Milton must be approved or condemned, according as the resistance of the people to Charles I shall appear to be justifiable or criminal. We shall therefore make no apology for dedicating a few pages to the discussion of that interesting and most important question. We shall not argue it on general grounds. We shall not recur to those primary principles from which the claim of any government to the obedience of its subjects is to be deduced. We are entitled to that vantage ground; but we will relinquish it. We are, on this point, so confident of superiority that we are not unwilling to imitate the ostentatious generosity of those ancient knights who vowed to joust without helmet or shield against all enemies, and to give their antagonists the advantage of sun and wind. We will take the naked constitutional question. We confidently affirm that every reason which can be urged in favor of the Revolution of 1688 may be urged with at least equal force in favor of what is called the Great Rebellion.

In one respect only, we think, can the warmest admirers of Charles venture to say that he was a better sovereign than his son. He was not, in name and profession, a Papist; we say in name and profession, because both Charles himself and his creature Laud, while they abjured the innocent badges of Popery, retained all its worst vices—a complete subjection of reason to authority, a weak preference of form to substance, a childish passion for mummeries, an idolatrous veneration for the priestly character, and, above all, a merciless intolerance. This, however, we waive. We will concede that Charles was a good Protestant; but we say that his Protestantism does not make the slightest distinction between his case and that of James.

The principles of the Revolution have often been grossly misrepresented, and never more than in the course of the present year. There is a certain class of men who, while they profess to hold in reverence the great names and great actions of former times, never look at them for any other purpose than in order to find in them some excuse for existing abuses. In every venerable precedent they pass by what is essential, and take only what is accidental: they keep out of sight what is beneficial, and hold up to public imitation all that is defective. If, in any part of any great example, there be anything unsound, these flesh-flies detect it with an unerring instinct, and dart upon it with a ravenous delight. If some good end has been attained in spite of them, they feel, with their prototype, that their

> "Labor must be to pervert that end,
> And out of good still to find means of evil."

To the blessings which England has derived from the Revolution these people are utterly insensible. The expulsion of a tyrant, the solemn recognition of popular rights—liberty, security, toleration—all go for nothing with them. One sect there was, which, from unfortunate temporary causes, it was thought necessary to keep under close restraint. One part of the empire there was, so unhappily circumstanced that at that time its misery was necessary to our happiness, and its slavery to our freedom. These are the parts of the Revolution which the politicians of whom we speak love to contemplate, and which seem to them not indeed to vindicate, but in some degree to palliate, the good which it has produced. Talk to them of Naples, of Spain, or of South America. They stand forth zealots for the doctrine of Divine Right, which has now come back to us, like a thief from transportation, under the *alias* of Legitimacy. But mention the miseries of Ireland. Then William is a hero. Then Somers and Shrewsbury are great men. Then the Revolution is a glorious era! The very same persons who, in this country, never omit an opportunity of reviving every wretched Jacobite slander respecting the Whigs of that period, have no sooner crossed St. George's Channel than they begin to fill their bumpers to the glorious and immortal memory. They may truly boast that they look not at men, but at measures. So that evil be

done, they care not who does it; the arbitrary Charles or the liberal William, Ferdinand the Catholic or Frederick the Protestant. On such occasions their deadliest opponents may reckon upon their candid construction. The bold assertions of these people have of late impressed a large portion of the public with an opinion that James II was expelled simply because he was a Catholic, and that the Revolution was essentially a Protestant revolution.

But this certainly was not the case, nor can any person who has acquired more knowledge of the history of those times than is to be found in Goldsmith's "Abridgment" believe that, if James had held his own religious opinions without wishing to make proselytes, or if, wishing even to make proselytes, he had contented himself with exerting only his constitutional influence for that purpose, the Prince of Orange would ever have been invited over. Our ancestors, we suppose, knew their own meaning; and, if we may believe them, their hostility was primarily not to Popery, but to tyranny. They did not drive out a tyrant because he was a Catholic; but they excluded Catholics from the crown because they thought them likely to be tyrants. The ground on which they, in their famous resolution, declared the throne vacant, was this, "that James had broken the fundamental laws of the kingdom." Every man, therefore, who approves of the Revolution of 1688 must hold that the breach of fundamental laws on the part of the sovereign justifies resistance. The question, then, is this: Had Charles I broken the fundamental laws of England?

No person can answer in the negative unless he refuses credit, not merely to all the accusations brought against Charles by his opponents, but to the narratives of the warmest Royalists, and to the confessions of the King himself. If there be any truth in any historian of any party who has related the events of that reign, the conduct of Charles, from his accession to the meeting of the Long Parliament, had been a continued course of oppression and treachery. Let those who applaud the Revolution and condemn the Rebellion mention one act of James II to which a parallel is not to be found in the history of his father. Let them lay their fingers on a single article in the Declaration of Right, presented by the two Houses to William and Mary, which Charles is not acknowledged to have violated. He had, accord-

ing to the testimony of his own friends, usurped the functions of the legislature, raised taxes without the consent of Parliament, and quartered troops on the people in the most illegal and vexatious manner. Not a single session of Parliament had passed without some unconstitutional attack on the freedom of debate. The right of petition was grossly violated. Arbitrary judgments, exorbitant fines, and unwarranted imprisonments were grievances of daily occurrence. If these things do not justify resistance, the Revolution was treason; if they do, the great Rebellion was laudable.

But, it is said, why not adopt milder measures? Why, after the King had consented to so many reforms and renounced so many oppressive prerogatives, did the Parliament continue to rise in their demands at the risk of provoking a civil war? The ship money had been given up, the Star Chamber had been abolished, provision had been made for the frequent convocation and secure deliberation of Parliaments. Why not pursue an end confessedly good by peaceable and regular means? We recur again to the analogy of the Revolution. Why was James driven from the throne? Why was he not retained upon conditions? He, too, had offered to call a free Parliament, and to submit to its decision all the matters in dispute. Yet we are in the habit of praising our forefathers, who preferred a revolution, a disputed succession, a dynasty of strangers, twenty years of foreign and intestine war, a standing army, and a national debt, to the rule, however restricted, of a tried and proved tyrant. The Long Parliament acted on the same principle, and is entitled to the same praise. They could not trust the King. He had, no doubt, passed salutary laws; but what assurance was there that he would not break them? He had renounced oppressive prerogatives; but where was the security that he would not resume them? The nation had to deal with a man whom no tie could bind; a man who made and broke promises with equal facility; a man whose honor had been a hundred times pawned, and never redeemed.

Here, indeed, the Long Parliament stands on still stronger ground than the Convention of 1688. No action of James can be compared to the conduct of Charles with respect to the Petition of Right. The Lords and Commons present him with a bill in which the constitutional limits of his power are marked

out. He hesitates; he evades; at last he bargains to give his assent for five subsidies. The bill receives his solemn assent; the subsidies are voted; but no sooner is the tyrant relieved than he returns at once to all the arbitrary measures which he had bound himself to abandon, and violates all the clauses of the very act which he had been paid to pass.

For more than ten years the people had seen the rights which were theirs by a double claim—by immemorial inheritance and by recent purchase—infringed by the perfidious King who had recognized them. At length circumstances compelled Charles to summon another Parliament. Another chance was given to our fathers: were they to throw it away as they had thrown away the former? Were they again to be cozened by *le Roi le veut?* Were they again to advance their money on pledges which had been forfeited over and over again? Were they to lay a second Petition of Right at the foot of the throne, to grant another lavish aid in exchange for another unmeaning ceremony, and then to take their departure, till, after ten years more of fraud and oppression, their prince should again require a supply, and again repay it with a perjury? They were compelled to choose whether they would trust a tyrant or conquer him. We think that they chose wisely and nobly.

The advocates of Charles, like the advocates of other malefactors against whom overwhelming evidence is produced, generally decline all controversy about the facts, and content themselves with calling testimony to character. He had so many private virtues! And had James II no private virtues? Was Oliver Cromwell, his bitterest enemies themselves being judges, destitute of private virtues? And what, after all, are the virtues ascribed to Charles? A religious zeal, not more sincere than that of his son, and fully as weak and narrow-minded, and a few of the ordinary household decencies which half the tombstones in England claim for those who lie beneath them. A good father! A good husband! Ample apologies indeed for fifteen years of persecution, tyranny, and falsehood!

We charge him with having broken his coronation oath; and we are told that he kept his marriage vow! We accuse him of having given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates; and the defence is that he took his little son on his knee, and kissed him! We

censure him for having violated the articles of the Petition of Right, after having, for good and valuable consideration, promised to observe them; and we are informed that he was accustomed to hear prayers at six o'clock in the morning! It is to such considerations as these, together with his Vandyke dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard, that he owes, we verily believe, most of his popularity with the present generation.

For ourselves, we own that we do not understand the common phrase, "a good man, but a bad king." We can as easily conceive a good man and an unnatural father, or a good man and a treacherous friend. We cannot, in estimating the character of an individual, leave out of our consideration his conduct in the most important of all human relations; and if in that relation we find him to have been selfish, cruel, and deceitful, we shall take the liberty to call him a bad man, in spite of all his temperance at table, and all his regularity at chapel.

We cannot refrain from adding a few words respecting a topic on which the defenders of Charles are fond of dwelling. If, they say, he governed his people ill, he at least governed them after the example of his predecessors. If he violated their privileges, it was because those privileges had not been accurately defined. No act of oppression has ever been imputed to him which has not a parallel in the annals of the Tudors. This point Hume has labored, with an art which is as discreditable in a historical work as it would be admirable in a forensic address. The answer is short, clear, and decisive. Charles had assented to the Petition of Right. He had renounced the oppressive powers said to have been exercised by his predecessors, and he had renounced them for money. He was not entitled to set up his antiquated claims against his own recent release.

These arguments are so obvious that it may seem superfluous to dwell upon them; but those who have observed how much the events of that time are misrepresented and misunderstood will not blame us for stating the case simply. It is a case of which the simplest statement is the strongest.

The enemies of the Parliament, indeed, rarely choose to take issue on the great points of the question. They content them-

selves with exposing some of the crimes and follies to which public commotions necessarily give birth. They bewail the unmerited fate of Strafford. They execrate the lawless violence of the army. They laugh at the scriptural names of the preachers. Major generals fleecing their districts; soldiers revelling on the spoils of a ruined peasantry; upstarts, enriched by the public plunder, taking possession of the hospitable firesides and hereditary trees of the gentry; boys smashing the beautiful windows of cathedrals; Quakers riding naked through the market-place; Fifth-monarchy men shouting for King Jesus; agitators lecturing from the tops of tubs on the fate of Agag; —all these, they tell us, were the offspring of the Great Rebellion.

Be it so. We are not careful to answer in this matter. These charges, were they infinitely more important, would not alter our opinion of an event which alone has made us to differ from the slaves who crouch beneath despotic sceptres. Many evils, no doubt, were produced by the civil war. They were the price of our liberty. Has the acquisition been worth the sacrifice? It is the nature of the devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which he leaves. Are the miseries of continued possession less horrible than the struggles of the tremendous exorcism?

If it were possible that a people brought up under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty and folly, half the objections to despotic power would be removed. We should, in that case, be compelled to acknowledge that it at least produces no pernicious effects on the intellectual and moral character of a nation. We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel that a revolution was necessary. The violence of those outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people, and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to live. Thus it was in our civil war. The heads of the Church and State reaped only that which they had sown. The government had prohibited free discussion; it had done its best to keep the people unacquainted with their duties and their rights. The retribution was just and natural. If our rulers suffered from popular ignorance, it was because they had them-

selves taken away the key of knowledge. If they were assailed with blind fury, it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission.

It is the character of such revolutions that we always see the worst of them at first. Till men have been some time free they know not how to use their freedom. The natives of wine countries are generally sober. In climates where wine is a rarity intemperance abounds. A newly liberated people may be compared to a northern army encamped on the Rhine or the Xeres. It is said that, when soldiers in such a situation first find themselves able to indulge without restraint in such a rare and expensive luxury, nothing is to be seen but intoxication. Soon, however, plenty teaches discretion, and, after wine has been for a few months their daily fare, they become more temperate than they had ever been in their own country. In the same manner, the final and permanent fruits of liberty are wisdom, moderation, and mercy. Its immediate effects are often atrocious crimes, conflicting errors, scepticism on points the most clear, dogmatism on points the most mysterious. It is just at this crisis that its enemies love to exhibit it. They pull down the scaffolding from the half-finished edifice; they point to the flying dust, the falling bricks, the comfortless rooms, the frightful irregularity of the whole appearance; and then ask in scorn where the promised splendor and comfort is to be found. If such miserable sophisms were to prevail there would never be a good house or a good government in the world.

Ariosto tells a pretty story of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were forever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her; accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape,

shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory!

There is only one cure for the evils which newly acquired freedom produces; and that cure is freedom. When a prisoner first leaves his cell he cannot bear the light of day; he is unable to discriminate colors, or recognize faces. But the remedy is, not to remand him into his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. The blaze of truth and liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder nations which have become half blind in the house of bondage. But let them gaze on, and they will soon be able to bear it. In a few years men learn to reason. The extreme violence of opinions subsides. Hostile theories correct each other. The scattered elements of truth cease to contend, and begin to coalesce. And at length a system of justice and order is educed out of the chaos.

Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water till he had learned to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait forever.

Therefore it is that we decidedly approve of the conduct of Milton and the other wise and good men who, in spite of much that was ridiculous and hateful in the conduct of their associates, stood firmly by the cause of public liberty. We are not aware that the poet has been charged with personal participation in any of the blamable excesses of that time. The favorite topic of his enemies is the line of conduct which he pursued with regard to the execution of the King. Of that celebrated proceeding we by no means approve. Still we must say, in justice to the many eminent persons who concurred in it, and in justice more particularly to the eminent person who defended it, that nothing can be more absurd than the imputations which, for the last hundred and sixty years, it has been the fashion to cast upon the regicides. We have, throughout, abstained from appealing to first principles. We will not appeal to them now. We recur again to the parallel case of the Revolution. What essential distinction can be drawn between the execution of the father and the deposition of the son? What constitutional maxim is there which applies to the former and not to the latter?

The King can do no wrong. If so, James was as innocent as Charles could have been. The minister, only, ought to be responsible for the acts of the sovereign. If so, why not impeach Jeffreys and retain James? The person of a king is sacred. Was the person of James considered sacred at the Boyne? To discharge cannon against an army in which a king is known to be posted is to approach pretty near to regicide. Charles, too, it should always be remembered, was put to death by men who had been exasperated by the hostilities of several years, and who had never been bound to him by any other tie than that which was common to them with all their fellow-citizens. Those who drove James from his throne, who seduced his army, who alienated his friends, who first imprisoned him in his palace, and then turned him out of it, who broke in upon his very slumbers by imperious messages, who pursued him with fire and sword from one part of the empire to another, who hanged, drew, and quartered his adherents, and attainted his innocent heir, were his nephew and his two daughters. When we reflect on all these things, we are at a loss to conceive how the same persons who, on the fifth of November, thank God for wonderfully conducting his servant William, and for making all opposition fall before him until he became our King and governor, can, on the thirtieth of January, contrive to be afraid that the blood of the royal martyr may be visited on themselves and their children.

We disapprove, we repeat, of the execution of Charles; not because the constitution exempts the King from responsibility, for we know that all such maxims, however excellent, have their exceptions; nor because we feel any peculiar interest in his character, for we think that his sentence describes him with perfect justice as "a tyrant, a traitor, a murderer, and a public enemy"; but because we are convinced that the measure was most injurious to the cause of freedom. He whom it removed was a captive and a hostage; his heir, to whom the allegiance of every Royalist was instantly transferred, was at large. The Presbyterians could never have been perfectly reconciled to the father; they had no such rooted enmity to the son. The great body of the people, also, contemplated that proceeding with feelings which, however unreasonable, no government could safely venture to outrage.

But though we think the conduct of the regicides blamable, that of Milton appears to us in a very different light. The deed was done. It could not be undone. The evil was incurred; and the object was to render it as small as possible. We censure the chiefs of the army for not yielding to the popular opinion; but we cannot censure Milton for wishing to change that opinion. The very feeling which would have restrained us from committing the act would have led us, after it had been committed, to defend it against the ravings of servility and superstition. For the sake of public liberty we wish that the thing had not been done while the people disapproved of it. But, for the sake of public liberty we should also have wished the people to approve of it when it was done. If anything more were wanting to the justification of Milton the book of Salmasius would furnish it. That miserable performance is now with justice considered only as a beacon to word-catchers who wish to become statesmen. The celebrity of the man who refuted it, the "*Æneæ magni dextra,*" gives it all its fame with the present generation. In that age the state of things was different. It was not then fully understood how vast an interval separates the mere classical scholar from the political philosopher. Nor can it be doubted that a treatise which, bearing the name of so eminent a critic, attacked the fundamental principles of all free governments, must, if suffered to remain unanswered, have produced a most pernicious effect on the public mind.

We wish to add a few words relative to another subject, on which the enemies of Milton delight to dwell—his conduct during the administration of the Protector. That an enthusiastic votary of liberty should accept office under a military usurper seems, no doubt, at first sight, extraordinary. But all the circumstances in which the country was then placed were extraordinary. The ambition of Oliver was of no vulgar kind. He never seems to have coveted despotic power. He at first fought sincerely and manfully for the Parliament, and never deserted it till it had deserted its duty. If he dissolved it by force, it was not till he found that the few members who remained after so many deaths, secessions, and expulsions, were desirous to appropriate to themselves a power which they held only in trust, and to inflict upon England the curse of a Venetian oligarchy.

But even when thus placed by violence at the head of affairs, he did not assume unlimited power. He gave the country a constitution far more perfect than any which had at that time been known in the world. He reformed the representative system in a manner which has extorted praise even from Lord Clarendon. For himself he demanded, indeed, the first place in the Commonwealth; but with powers scarcely so great as those of a Dutch stadtholder or an American president. He gave the Parliament a voice in the appointment of ministers, and left to it the whole legislative authority, not even reserving to himself a veto on its enactments; and he did not require that the chief magistracy should be hereditary in his family. Thus far, we think, if the circumstances of the time and the opportunities which he had of aggrandizing himself be fairly considered, he will not lose by comparison with Washington or Bolivar. Had his moderation been met by corresponding moderation there is no reason to think that he would have overstepped the line which he had traced for himself. But when he found that his Parliaments questioned the authority under which they met, and that he was in danger of being deprived of the restricted power which was absolutely necessary to his personal safety, then it must be acknowledged he adopted a more arbitrary policy.

Yet, though we believe that the intentions of Cromwell were at first honest, though we believe that he was driven from the noble course which he had marked out for himself by the almost irresistible force of circumstances, though we admire, in common with all men of all parties, the ability and energy of his splendid administration, we are not pleading for arbitrary and lawless power, even in his hands. We know that a good constitution is infinitely better than the best despot. But we suspect, that at the time of which we speak, the violence of religious and political enmities rendered a stable and happy settlement next to impossible. The choice lay, not between Cromwell and liberty, but between Cromwell and the Stuarts. That Milton chose well no man can doubt who fairly compares the events of the Protectorate with those of the thirty years which succeeded it, the darkest and most disgraceful in the English annals. Cromwell was evidently laying, though in an irregular manner, the foundations of an admirable system.

Never before had religious liberty and the freedom of discussion been enjoyed in a greater degree. Never had the national honor been better upheld abroad, or the seat of justice better filled at home. And it was rarely that any opposition which stopped short of open rebellion provoked the resentment of the liberal and magnanimous usurper. The institutions which he had established, as set down in the "Instrument of Government," and the "Humble Petition and Advice," were excellent. His practice, it is true, too often departed from the theory of these institutions. But had he lived a few years longer, it is probable that his institutions would have survived him, and that his arbitrary practice would have died with him. His power had not been consecrated by ancient prejudices. It was upheld only by his great personal qualities. Little, therefore, was to be dreaded from a second Protector, unless he were also a second Oliver Cromwell. The events which followed his decease are the most complete vindication of those who exerted themselves to uphold his authority. His death dissolved the whole frame of society. The army rose against the Parliament, the different corps of the army against each other. Sect raved against sect. Party plotted against party. The Presbyterians, in their eagerness to be revenged on the Independents, sacrificed their own liberty, and deserted all their old principles. Without casting one glance on the past, or requiring one stipulation for the future, they threw down their freedom at the feet of the most frivolous and heartless of tyrants.

Then came those days, never to be recalled without a blush, the days of servitude without loyalty, and sensuality without love; of dwarfish talents and gigantic vices; the paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds; the golden age of the coward, the bigot, and the slave. The King cringed to his rival that he might trample on his people, sank into a viceroy of France, and pocketed with complacent infamy her degrading insults and her more degrading gold. The caresses of harlots and the jests of buffoons regulated the policy of the State. The government had just ability enough to deceive, and just religion enough to persecute. The principles of liberty were the scoff of every grinning courtier, and the Anathema Maranatha of every fawning dean. In every high place, worship was paid to Charles and James, Belial and Moloch; and England propitiated those ob-

scene and cruel idols with the blood of her best and bravest children. Crime succeeded to crime, and disgrace to disgrace, till the race, accursed of God and man, was a second time driven forth, to wander on the face of the earth, and to be a byword and a shaking of the head to the nations.

Most of the remarks which we have hitherto made on the public character of Milton apply to him only as one of a large body. We shall proceed to notice some of the peculiarities which distinguished him from his contemporaries. And for that purpose it is necessary to take a short survey of the parties into which the political world was at that time divided. We must premise that our observations are intended to apply only to those who adhered, from a sincere preference, to one or to the other side. In days of public commotion every faction, like an Oriental army, is attended by a crowd of camp-followers, a useless and heartless rabble, who prowl round its line of march in the hope of picking up something under its protection, but desert it in the day of battle, and often join to exterminate it after a defeat. England, at the time of which we are treating, abounded with fickle and selfish politicians, who transferred their support to every government as it rose; who kissed the hand of the King in 1640, and spat in his face in 1649; who shouted with equal glee when Cromwell was inaugurated in Westminster Hall, and when he was dug up to be hanged at Tyburn; who dined on calves' heads, or stuck up oak branches, as circumstances altered, without the slightest shame or repugnance. These we leave out of the account. We take our estimate of parties from those who really deserve to be called partisans.

We would speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced. The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were, as a body, unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them

under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learned. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of that potent ridicule which has already misled so many excellent writers.

> "*Ecco il fonte del riso, ed ecco il rio*
> *Che mortali perigli in se contiene:*
> *Hor qui tener a fren nostro desio,*
> *Ed esser cauti molto a noi conviene.*" [2]

Those who roused the people to resistance; who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years; who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen; who trampled down King, church, and aristocracy; who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth—were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of free-masonry, or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles I, or the easy good breeding for which the court of Charles II was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play, turn from the specious caskets which contain only the death's-head and the fool's head, and fix on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar

[2] Tasso, "Gerusalemme Liberata," xv. 57. John Hoole's translation is as follows:

"Behold the fatal spring where laughter dwells,
Dire poison lurking in its secret cells;
Here let us guard our thoughts, our passions rein,
And every loose desire in bonds detain."

character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging, in general terms, an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know Him, to serve Him, to enjoy Him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on the intolerable brightness, and to commune with Him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seemed to vanish, when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from Him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognized no title to superiority but His favor; and, confident of that favor, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems, crowns of glory which should never fade away. On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt; for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged, on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest; who had been destined, before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which shortsighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed His will by the pen of the evangelist and the harp

of the prophet. He had been wrested by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, that the dead had risen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God.

Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men: the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker; but he set his foot on the neck of his King. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane, he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood, he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid his face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment and an immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them Stoics, had cleared their minds from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through the world, like Sir Artegal's iron man Talus with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings,

but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities; insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain; not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.

Such we believe to have been the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach; and we know that, in spite of their hatred of Popery, they too often fell into the worst vices of that bad system—intolerance and extravagant austerity; that they had their anchorites and their crusades, their Dunstans and their De Montforts, their Dominics and their Escobars. Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest, and a useful body.

The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty mainly because it was the cause of religion. There was another party, by no means numerous, but distinguished by learning and ability, which acted with them on very different principles. We speak of those whom Cromwell was accustomed to call the heathens, men who were, in the phraseology of that time, doubting Thomases or careless Gallios with regard to religious subjects, but passionate worshippers of freedom. Heated by the study of ancient literature, they set up their country as their idol, and proposed to themselves the heroes of Plutarch as their examples. They seem to have borne some resemblance to the Brissotines of the French Revolution. But it is not very easy to draw the line of distinction between them and their devout associates, whose tone and manner they sometimes found it convenient to affect, and sometimes, it is probable, imperceptibly adopted.

We now come to the Royalists. We shall attempt to speak of them, as we have spoken of their antagonists, with perfect candor. We shall not charge upon a whole party the profligacy and baseness of the horse boys, gamblers, and bravoes, whom the hope of license and plunder attracted from all the dens of Whitefriars to the standard of Charles, and who disgraced their associates by excesses which, under the stricter discipline of the parliamentary armies, were never tolerated. We will select a more favorable specimen. Thinking as we do that the cause of

the King was the cause of bigotry and tyranny, we yet cannot refrain from looking with complacency on the character of the honest old Cavaliers. We feel a national pride in comparing them with the instruments which the despots of other countries are compelled to employ; with the mutes who throng their antechambers, and the janizaries who mount guard at their gates. Our Royalist countrymen were not heartless, dangling courtiers, bowing at every step, and simpering at every word. They were not mere machines for destruction, dressed up in uniforms, caned into skill, intoxicated into valor, defending without love, destroying without hatred. There was a freedom in their subserviency, a nobleness in their very degradation. The sentiment of individual independence was strong within them. They were indeed misled, but by no base or selfish motive. Compassion and romantic honor, the prejudices of childhood, and the venerable names of history, threw over them a spell potent as that of Duessa; and, like the Red Cross Knight, they thought that they were doing battle for an injured beauty, while they defended a false and loathsome sorceress. In truth, they scarcely entered at all into the merits of the political question. It was not for a treacherous king or an intolerant church that they fought, but for the old banner which had waved in so many battles over the heads of their fathers, and for the altars at which they had received the hands of their brides. Though nothing could be more erroneous than their political opinions, they possessed, in a far greater degree than their adversaries, those qualities which are the grace of private life. With many of the vices of the Round Table, they had also many of its virtues—courtesy, generosity, veracity, tenderness, and respect for women. They had far more both of profound and of polite learning than the Puritans. Their manners were more engaging, their tempers more amiable, their tastes more elegant, and their households more cheerful.

Milton did not strictly belong to any of the classes which we have described. He was not a Puritan. He was not a free-thinker. He was not a Royalist. In his character the noblest qualities of every party were combined in harmonious union. From the Parliament and from the court, from the conventicle and from the Gothic cloister, from the gloomy and sepulchral circles of the Roundheads, and from the Christmas revel of the

hospitable Cavalier, his nature selected and drew to itself whatever was great and good, while it rejected all the base and pernicious ingredients by which those finer elements were defiled. Like the Puritans, he lived

"As ever in his great Taskmaster's eye."

Like them, he kept his mind continually fixed on an Almighty Judge and an eternal reward. And hence he acquired their contempt of external circumstances, their fortitude, their tranquillity, their inflexible resolution. But not the coolest sceptic or the most profane scoffer was more perfectly free from the contagion of their frantic delusions, their savage manners, their ludicrous jargon, their scorn of science, and their aversion to pleasure. Hating tyranny with a perfect hatred, he had nevertheless all the estimable and ornamental qualities which were almost entirely monopolized by the party of the tyrant. There was none who had a stronger sense of the value of literature, a finer relish for every elegant amusement, or a more chivalrous delicacy of honor and love. Though his opinions were democratic, his tastes and his associations were such as harmonize best with monarchy and aristocracy. He was under the influence of all the feelings by which the gallant Cavaliers were misled. But of those feelings he was the master and not the slave. Like the hero of Homer, he enjoyed all the pleasures of fascination; but he was not fascinated. He listened to the song of the Sirens; yet he glided by without being seduced to their fatal shore. He tasted the cup of Circe; but he bore about him a sure antidote against the effects of its bewitching sweetness. The illusions which captivated his imagination never impaired his reasoning powers. The statesman was proof against the splendor, the solemnity, and the romance which enchanted the poet. Any person who will contrast the sentiments expressed in his treatises on prelacy with the exquisite lines on ecclesiastical architecture and music in the "Penseroso," which was published about the same time, will understand our meaning. This is an inconsistency which, more than anything else, raises his character in our estimation, because it shows how many private tastes and feelings he sacrificed in order to do what he considered his duty to mankind. It is the very struggle of the noble Othello. His heart relents; but his hand is firm. He does

naught in hate, but all in honor. He kisses the beautiful deceiver before he destroys her.

That from which the public character of Milton derives its great and peculiar splendor still remains to be mentioned. If he exerted himself to overthrow a forsworn king and a persecuting hierarchy, he exerted himself in conjunction with others. But the glory of the battle which he fought for the species of freedom which is the most valuable, and which was then the least understood, the freedom of the human mind, is all his own. Thousands and tens of thousands among his contemporaries raised their voices against ship money and the Star Chamber. But there were few indeed who discerned the more fearful evils of moral and intellectual slavery, and the benefits which would result from the liberty of the press and the unfettered exercise of private judgment. These were the objects which Milton justly conceived to be the most important. He was desirous that the people should think for themselves as well as tax themselves, and should be emancipated from the dominion of prejudice as well as from that of Charles. He knew that those who, with the best intentions, overlooked these schemes of reform, and contented themselves with pulling down the King and imprisoning the malignants, acted like the heedless brothers in his own poem, who, in their eagerness to disperse the train of the sorcerer, neglected the means of liberating the captive. They thought only of conquering when they should have thought of disenchanting.

> "Oh, ye mistook, ye should have snatch'd his wand,
> And bound him fast; without his rod reversed,
> And backward mutters of dissevering power,
> We cannot free the lady that sits here
> In stony fetters fix'd, and motionless." [3]

To reserve the rod, to spell the charm backward, to break the ties which bound a stupefied people to the seat of enchantment, was the noble aim of Milton. To this all his public conduct was directed. For this he joined the Presbyterians; for this he forsook them. He fought their perilous battle; but he turned away with disdain from their insolent triumph. He saw that they, like those whom they had vanquished, were hostile to the

[3] "Comus," 815-819.

liberty of thought. He therefore joined the Independents, and called upon Cromwell to break the secular chain, and to save free conscience from the paw of the Presbyterian wolf. With a view to the same great object, he attacked the licensing system, in that sublime treatise which every statesman should wear as a sign upon his hand and as frontlets between his eyes. His attacks were, in general, directed less against particular abuses than against those deeply seated errors on which almost all abuses are founded—the servile worship of eminent men and the irrational dread of innovation.

That he might shake the foundations of these debasing sentiments more effectually, he always selected for himself the boldest literary services. He never came up in the rear, when the out-works had been carried and the breach entered. He pressed into the forlorn hope. At the beginning of the changes, he wrote with incomparable energy and eloquence against the bishops. But, when his opinion seemed likely to prevail, he passed on to other subjects, and abandoned prelacy to the crowd of writers who now hastened to insult a falling party. There is no more hazardous enterprise than that of bearing the torch of truth into those dark and infected recesses in which no light has ever shone. But it was the choice and the pleasure of Milton to penetrate the noisome vapors, and to brave the terrible explosion. Those who most disapprove of his opinions must respect the hardihood with which he maintained them. He, in general, left to others the credit of expounding and defending the popular parts of his religious and political creed. He took his own stand upon those which the great body of his countrymen reprobated as criminal, or derided as parodoxical. He stood up for divorce and regicide. He attacked the prevailing systems of education. His radiant and beneficent career resembled that of the god of light and fertility:—

> "*Nitor in adversum; nec me, qui cætera, vincit*
> *Impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi.*" [4]

It is to be regretted that the prose writings of Milton should, in our time, be so little read. As compositions, they deserve the attention of every man who wishes to become acquainted with the full power of the English language. They abound with

[4] Ovid, "Metamorphoses," Book II, 72.

passages compared with which the finest declamations of Burke sink into insignificance. They are a perfect field of cloth of gold. The style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery. Not even in the earlier books of the "Paradise Lost" has the great poet ever risen higher than in those parts of his controversial works in which his feelings, excited by conflict, find a vent in bursts of devotional and lyric rapture. It is, to borrow his own majestic language, "a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies."

We had intended to look more closely at these performances, to analyze the peculiarities of the diction, to dwell at some length on the sublime wisdom of the "Areopagitica" and the nervous rhetoric of the "Iconoclast," and to point out some of those magnificent passages which occur in the "Treatise of Reformation," and the "Animadversions on the Remonstrant." But the length to which our remarks have already extended renders this impossible.

We must conclude. And yet we can scarcely tear ourselves away from the subject. The days immediately following the publication of this relic of Milton appear to be peculiarly set apart, and consecrated to his memory. And we shall scarcely be censured if, on this his festival, we be found lingering near his shrine, how worthless soever may be the offering which we bring to it. While this book lies on our table we seem to be contemporaries of the writer. We are transported a hundred and fifty years back. We can almost fancy that we are visiting him in his small lodging; that we see him sitting at the old organ beneath the faded green hangings; that we can catch the quick twinkle of his eyes, rolling in vain to find the day; that we are reading in the lines of his noble countenance the proud and mournful history of his glory and his affliction. We image to ourselves the breathless silence in which we should listen to his slightest word; the passionate veneration with which we should kneel to kiss his hand and weep upon it; the earnestness with which we should endeavor to console him, if indeed such a spirit could need consolation, for the neglect of an age unworthy of his talents and his virtues; the eagerness with which we should contest with his daughters, or with his Quaker friend Ellwood, the privilege of reading Homer to him, or of taking down the immortal accents which flowed from his lips.

These are perhaps foolish feelings. Yet we cannot be ashamed of them; nor shall we be sorry if what we have written shall in any degree excite them in other minds. We are not much in the habit of idolizing either the living or the dead. And we think that there is no more certain indication of a weak and ill-regulated intellect than that propensity which, for want of a better name, we will venture to christen Boswellism. But there are a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure, which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High. These great men we trust that we know how to prize; and of these was Milton. The sight of his books, the sound of his name, are pleasant to us. His thoughts resemble those celestial fruits and flowers which the Virgin Martyr of Massinger sent down from the gardens of Paradise to the earth, and which were distinguished from the productions of other soils, not only by superior bloom and sweetness, but by miraculous efficacy to invigorate and to heal. They are powerful, not only to delight, but to elevate and purify. Nor do we envy the man who can study either the life or the writings of the great poet and patriot, without aspiring to emulate, not indeed the sublime works with which his genius has enriched our literature, but the zeal with which he labored for the public good, the fortitude with which he endured every private calamity, the lofty disdain with which he looked down on temptations and dangers, the deadly hatred which he bore to bigots and tyrants, and the faith which he so sternly kept with his country and with his fame.

RECOLLECTIONS OF GUY FAWKES

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BY

DOUGLAS JERROLD

DOUGLAS JERROLD

1803—1857

Douglas Jerrold was born in London on January 3, 1803, but spent his early life at Sheerness, where his father was manager of the local theatre. His education was scanty. He went to sea at an early age, sailing with Captain Austen, as a midshipman. When peace came he left the navy, and was apprenticed to a printer. It was at this time that his first literary production appeared—a criticism upon the opera "Der Freischutz." This was followed by a number of dramatic pieces, among which "Black-Eyed Susan" was the most celebrated. He then became a most industrious writer of plays. "Rent Day" was his crowning success, performed at the leading theatres, and obtaining the kindly notice of the artist Wilkie, from whose picture it had been elaborated. This was followed by "The Prisoner of War," "Time Works Wonders," and "The Heart of Gold."

Contemporaneously with these dramatic writings his prose works were claiming attention of the public. "A Man made of Money," "The Chronicles of Clovernook," "St. Giles's and St. James's," were contributed to different magazines of the day. "Punch" found him one of its most successful supporters. In this paper appeared his "Story of a Father," "Punch's Letters to His Son," and the "Caudle Lectures."

He took a leading part also in political writings. He contributed to the "Ballot" and the "Examiner," started the weekly newspaper called after his own name, and at last undertook the editorship of the popular and largely circulated "Lloyd's Newspaper." Douglas Jerrold was a shining light in social circles. His wit and repartee, his trenchant and mirthful sayings, are still remembered and repeated. He died on June 8, 1857.

In reviewing his works in the London "Athenæum," a prominent critic said: "A perusal of them (Jerrold's works) serve to confirm our original opinion that their object is to advance the good of mankind; that to this object there has been a devotion of rare skill, undoubted originality, imperturbable good-temper, concealed, perhaps, occasionally under apparent fierceness of phrase, and a force and flash of wit at once dazzling and delightful. A body of works more original, either in the artistic construction or in the informing spirit, has not been added to the literature of our time." "Recollections of Guy Fawkes," the essay given here, is included in a collection of his essays called "Fireside Saints."

RECOLLECTIONS OF GUY FAWKES

"When a man has once been very famous for jests and merry adventures, he is made to adopt all the jests that want a father, and many times such as are unworthy of him."—*Motteux's* "Life of Rabelais."

AT midnight, on the Fifth of November, in the year of grace one thousand six hundred and five, Guido Fawkes, "gentleman," was discovered, "booted and spurred," in the vicinity of St. Stephen's Chapel, having on his person "three matches, a tinder-box, and a dark-lantern"; and purposing, by means of gunpowder, to blow up, says King James, "the whole nobility, the most part of the knights and gentry," besides "the whole judges of the land, with most of the lawyers, and the whole clerks." For this one indiscretion Guido Fawkes has forfeited his gentility, and become a proverb of wickedness. In boyhood, we looked upon Guido Fawkes, gentleman, as one a little lower than the devil: he had four horns and a dozen tails. "Years that bring the philosophic mind" have divested him of these excrescences and appendages, and Guido Fawkes now appears to matured charities merely a person of a singularly eccentric disposition.

Some five-and-twenty years ago it was the patriotic custom of the authorities of an Isle of Sheppy dockyard to bestow upon their apprentices a few wagon-loads of resinous timber, that a bonfire worthy of the cause it celebrated might be kindled from the public purse—that the effigy of the arch-fiend Guy might be consumed in a fire three times hotter than the fire of a furnace. Such fierce liberality was not lost upon the town's people: their ardor in the burning business smouldered not; every man subscribed his plank or log; and, from the commission in his uniform to Bobby in his pinafore, the Fifth of November glowed in the calendar of their minds a pillar of fire. For a month before the day, the coming anniversary busied the thoughts of boyish executioners, resolved to show

their patriotism in the appointments of their Guy—in the grotesque iniquity of his face, in the cumbrous state of his huge arm-chair. To beg clothes from door to door was then the business of every lover of Church and State. To ask for a coat, a pair of breeches, a shirt (the frill could be made of paper), hose and hat, was not mendicity, but the fulfilment of a high social duty.

Guy Fawkes would at length be dressed. A philosopher might have found good matter in his eleemosynary suit. In the coat of the bloodthirsty wretch, he might have recognized the habit of Scum, the slopseller, a quiet trader, afloat of £20,000; in the vest of the villanous ruffian, the discarded waistcoat of Smallgrog, the honest landlord of a little house for sailors; in the stockings of the atrocious miscreant, the hose of the equitable Weevil, biscuit-contractor to his Majesty's fleet; whilst for the leather of the fiend-like effigy, Guy Fawkes was to be exhibited, and afterwards burned, in the broad-toed shoes of that best of men, Trap, the town attorney.

The chair, too, in which Guy Fawkes sat, might it not have some day enshrined a justice of the peace? and the lantern, fixed in the hand of the diabolical, lynx-eyed monster, might it not have been the property of the most amiable and most somnolent of all the Blue Town watchmen? And then the mask fixed upon the effigy—or the lump of clay kneaded into human features, and horribly or delicately expressed, according to the benevolent art of the makers—might not the same visor have been worn by a perfect gentleman, with considerable advantage, at a masquerade?—might not the clay nose and mouth of the loathsome traitor have borne an accidental likeness to the very pink of patriots? Let philosophy ponder well on Guy Fawkes.

We will now attempt our childish recollections of the great Guy. We have waked at midnight, perhaps, dreaming of the bonfire about to blaze, and thinking we heard the distant chorus sounding the advent of the Mighty Terror. No, it was the sea booming across the marsh—the wind rising and falling. There was nothing for it but to go to sleep, and dream of unextinguishable squibs and crackers. At length four o'clock arrives; the cocks crow; the boys can't be long now. There—hark! How the chant comes up the street, like one voice

—the voice of a solitary, droning witch! We lie breathless, and shape to ourselves Guy Fawkes in the dark! Our hearts beat quicker and quicker as the chant becomes louder; and we sit up in the bed, as the boys approach the door, and, O, how we wish to be with them! There—there they are, in full chorus! Hark!—

> **"The fifth of November, as I can remember,**
> **Is gunpowder treason and plot—**
> **I know no reason, why gunpowder treason**
> **Should ever be forgot!"**

We feel an unutterable pang, for loudest among the loud we hear the shrill voice of Jack Tarleton. "Ha!" we sigh, "his mother lets him out." The bitterness passes away with the

> **"Hallo, boys! hallo, boys! make a round ring—**
> **Hallo, boys! hallo, boys! God save the King!"**

And now the procession moves on, and the voices die in the distance, and we feel we are left alone; and, in a few minutes, we hear new revellers, rejoicing in the captivity of a suit of clothes stuffed with hay, and called Guy Fawkes! They pass on, and are followed by others, and our little brains are set at work, and seem seething in the song. Guy Fawkes! Guy Fawkes! Who—*what is Guy Fawkes?* We had been told that he had been caught with lantern, tinder-box, and matches, ready to blow up thousands of barrels of gunpowder, and so to destroy the King, bishops, and members of Parliament. It must be shocking—very shocking: still, we could not perfectly envisage the atrocity—we could not make out the full horror. We had an undefined sense of the greatness of a King, though we hardly dared to hope we should ever see one. We had a less remote notion of the nature of a bishop, having been helped somewhat in our speculation by the person of the curate at the garrison church. "Curates may come to be bishops, only bishops are very much greater; and curates have nothing upon their heads, whereas certain bishops might wear mitres." On learning this, we thought that bishops were merely full-grown curates; in the same way that we had seen Poland hens with their topknots of feathers, only the spring before bareheaded little chicks. It was thus, in the irrever-

ence of childhood, we disposed of the whole bench of bishops. But now came we to the difficulty—what, what could be a member of Parliament? Was it a living thing? If so, had it a voice? Could it speak? Could it sit? Could it say yes and no? Could it walk? Could it turn? Or was it merely an image? Was it pulled by wires, like sister Jenny's doll? We had been told that members of Parliament made laws. What were laws? Were they the lions and unicorns on the King's arms? Were they a better sort of cakes, too dear for everybody to buy? Little boys ate Parliament cakes—were laws cakes for men? If so, were they gilt or plain?—with comfits or without?

It is no matter, we thought, being unable to satisfy ourselves: it is no matter. Guy Fawkes—that shadowy, terrible mystery—had once lived, and had tried to kill the King, the full-grown curates, and those undivined riddles—members of Parliament. We again went to our first question, Who was Guy Fawkes? Did he have a father and mother? Was Guy Fawkes ever a little boy, and did he fly a kite and play at marbles? If so, how could he have ever thought it worth his while to trouble himself with other matters? There was something terrifying in the idea of having played with Guy Fawkes. We fancied him at taw—we saw him *knuckle-down.* No—it could not be; the imagination of the child could not dwell upon such an impossibility. Guy Fawkes a boy!—a baby!—now shaking a rattle—now murmuring as he fed, his mother smiling down upon him! No, no—it was impossible. Guy Fawkes was never born—he was from the first a man—he never could have been a baby. He seemed to us a part of the things that had always been, and always would be—a piece of grim eternity; a principle of everlasting wickedness.

(Is it in childhood alone—is it only in the dim imaginings of infancy—in the wandering guesses of babyhood, that we manifest this ignorance? When the full-grown thief is hanged, do we not sometimes forget that he was the child of misery and vice—born for the gallows, nursed for the halter? Did we legislate a little more for the cradle, might we not be spared some pains for the "hulks"?)

And then we had been told Guy Fawkes came from Spain. Where was Spain? Was it a million miles away? and what

distance was a million miles? Were there little boys in Spain, or were they all like Guy Fawkes? How strange, and yet how delightful to us did it seem to feel that we were a part of the wonderful things about us! To be at all upon this world—to be one at the great show of men and women—to feel that when we grew bigger we should know everything of kings, bishops, members of Parliament, and Guy Fawkes! What a golden glory hung about the undiscovered!

And Guy Fawkes, we had heard, had his head cut off, and his body cut into quarters! Could this be true? Could men do to men what we had seen Fulk the butcher do to sheep? How much, we thought, had little boys to grow out of before they could agree to this! And then, when done, what was the good of it?—*what could be* the good of it? Was Guy Fawkes eaten? If not, *why* cut him up?

Had Guy Fawkes a wife, and little boys and girls? Did he love his children, and buy them toys and apples?—or, like Sawney Bean, did he devour them? Did Guy Fawkes say his prayers?

Had Guy Fawkes a friend? Did he ever laugh—did he ever tell a droll story? Did Guy Fawkes ever sing a song? Like Frampton, the Blue Town barber, did Guy Fawkes ever get drunk? At length we put to ourselves the question of questions:—

"Was there ever such a man as Guy Fawkes? Did Guy Fawkes ever live?"

This query annoyed us with the doubt that we had been tricked into a hate, a fear, a loathing, a wonder, and a mixture of these passions and emotions, for a fib. We felt disappointed when we felt the reality of Guy Fawkes to be doubtful. We had heard of griffins, and unicorns, of dragons, that had eaten men like apples; and had then been told that there never had been any such thing. If we were not to believe in a dragon, why should we believe in Guy Fawkes? After all, was the whole story but make-game?

The child passively accepts a story of the future—he can bring his mind up to a thing promised, but wants faith in the past. The cause is obvious: he recollects few things gone, but is full of things to come. Hence, Guy Fawkes was with us the ogre of a nursery; we could have readily believed,

especially after the story of Beauty and the Beast, that he married Goody Two Shoes, and was the father of little Red Riding Hood.

But Guy Fawkes grows with us from boyhood to youth. He gets flesh and blood with every November; he is no longer the stuffed plaything of a schoolboy or the grotesque excuse for begging vagabonds, but the veritable Guy Fawkes, "gentleman." We see him, "Thomas Percy's alleged man," at the door of the vault, "booted and spurred";—we behold that "very tall and desperate fellow," lurking in the deep of night, with looks of deadly resolution, pounced upon by that vigilant gentleman of the privy chamber, Sir Thomas Knevet! We go with Guido, "the new Mutius Scævola, born in England," before the Council, where "he often smiles in scornful manner, not only avowing the fact, but repenting only, with the said Scævola, his failing in the execution thereof." We think of him "answering quickly to every man's objection, scoffing at any idle questions which were propounded to him, and jesting with such as he thought had no authority to examine him." And then we think of the thanksgiving of the great James, who gave praise that, had the intent of the wicked prevailed, he should not have "died ingloriously in an alehouse, or stew, or such vile place," but with "the best and most honorable company." [1]

Guy Fawkes is, in our baby thought, a mysterious vision—one of the shadows of evil advancing on the path of childhood. We grow older, and the substances of evil come close upon us—we see their dark-lanterns and snuff the brimstone.

[1] See "His Majesty's speech concerning the Gunpowder Plot," etc., in the "Harleian Miscellany."

NIL NISI BONUM

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BY

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

1811—1863

William Makepeace Thackeray belonged to a Yorkshire family, and was born at Calcutta in 1811, his father being at that time in the civil service of the East India Company. He was early brought to England, and was educated first at the Charter House, and then at Cambridge University, which he left without taking a degree. He began life with a fair fortune, and his inclination was for the life of an artist. To prepare himself for such a course he travelled on the Continent, visiting Rome, Paris, and Weimar, seeing Goethe there, and associating principally wherever he went with artists. When it became necessary for him to work, however, instead of art, he applied himself to literature. At first he wrote for various journals and periodicals, contributing tales, essays, sketches, reviews, and poems. Some brilliant epigrammatic articles in the "Examiner" were from his pen; and for "Fraser's Magazine" he wrote, under the suggestive name of Michael Angelo Titmarsh, some of the best of his minor pieces. Among these were "The Great Hoggarty Diamond" and "The Shabby Genteel Story." He joined the staff of "Punch," for which his sparkling wit, refined satire, and genuine humor so admirably qualified him. The well-known "Snob Papers" and "Jeames's Diary" originally appeared in the pages of "Punch."

In 1844 he visited the East for the benefit of his health, and soon after published a record of his travels under the title of "Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Cairo." The same year in which this appeared, 1846, Thackeray published in monthly numbers the masterly fiction which first fairly showed the world what he could do, and established his reputation—"Vanity Fair." This was followed in 1849-50 by "Pendennis;" in 1852 by his charming "History of Henry Esmond," the most studied and highly finished of all his works; "The Virginians," a sequel to "Esmond" (which four masterpieces have been happily named by a friendly critic the "Thackeray Quadrilateral"); "The Newcomes," and the "Adventures of Philip in His Way Through the World." His shorter works are very numerous. In 1851 Thackeray ventured on a new line of work, and delivered his "Lectures on the English Humorists," first in London and the principal towns of England, and then in the United States. He made a second visit to America in 1855, and on that occasion first delivered the "Lectures on the Four Georges." These also were afterwards listened to with admiration in England. In 1859 he started the "Cornhill Magazine," and for a while undertook the task of editor. In the pages of his magazine appeared the story of "Philip" and the "Roundabout Papers." Thackeray was a child in all the qualities of heart. In person he was tall and strongly built, with a noble head, covered in the latter years of his life with a mass of silvery white hair. His death took place at his house in Kensington Palace Gardens on December 24, 1863. A bust of Thackeray, by Matochetti, has been placed in Westminster Abbey.

His delightful essay called "Nil Nisi Bonum" is in the nature of a lay sermon to young men of letters. Thackeray's style as an essayist is not unlike that of Addison, abounding as it does in grace and humor. James Hannay said: "Thackeray's English is one of his greatest merits. It is pure, clear, simple in its power, and harmonious, clean, sinewy, fine and yet strong, like the legs of a race horse."

NIL NISI BONUM

ALMOST the last words which Sir Walter spoke to Lockhart, his biographer, were: "Be a good man, my dear!" and with the last flicker of breath on his dying lips, he sighed a farewell to his family, and passed away blessing them.

Two men, famous, admired, beloved, have just left us, the Goldsmith and the Gibbon of our time.[1] Ere a few weeks are over, many a critic's pen will be at work, reviewing their lives, and passing judgment on their works. This is no review, or history, or criticism; only a word in testimony of respect and regard from a man of letters, who owes to his own professional labor the honor of becoming acquainted with these two eminent literary men. One was the first ambassador whom the New World of Letters sent to the Old. He was born almost with the republic; the *pater patriæ* had laid his hand on the child's head. He bore Washington's name: he came amongst us bringing the kindest sympathy, the most artless, smiling goodwill. His new country (which some people here might be disposed to regard rather superciliously) could send us, as he showed in his own person, a gentleman who, though himself born in no very high sphere, was most finished, polished, easy, witty, quiet; and, socially, the equal of the most refined Europeans. If Irving's welcome in England was a kind one, was it not also gratefully remembered? If he ate our salt, did he not pay us with a thankful heart? Who can calculate the amount of friendliness and good feeling for our country which this writer's generous and untiring regard for us disseminated in his own? His books are read by millions[2] of his countrymen, whom he has taught to love England, and why to love her. It would have been easy to speak otherwise

[1] Washington Irving died November 28, 1859; Lord Macaulay died December 28, 1859.

[2] See his life in the most remarkable "Dictionary of Authors," published lately at Philadelphia, by Mr. Allibone.

than he did; to inflame national rancors, which, at the time when he first became known as a public writer, war had just renewed; to cry down the old civilization at the expense of the new; to point out our faults, arrogance, shortcomings, and give the republic to infer how much she was the parent State's superior. There are writers enough in the United States, honest and otherwise, who preach that kind of doctrine. But the good Irving, the peaceful, the friendly, had no place for bitterness in his heart, and no scheme but kindness. Received in England with extraordinary tenderness and friendship (Scott, Southey, Byron, a hundred others have borne witness to their liking for him), he was a messenger of goodwill and peace between his country and ours. "See, friends!" he seems to say, "these English are not so wicked, rapacious, callous, proud, as you have been taught to believe them. I went amongst them a humble man; won my way by my pen; and, when known, found every hand held out to me with kindliness and welcome. Scott is a great man, you acknowledge. Did not Scott's King of England give a gold medal to him, and another to me, your countryman, and a stranger?"

Tradition in the United States still fondly retains the history of the feasts and rejoicings which awaited Irving on his return to his native country from Europe. He had a national welcome; he stammered in his speeches, hid himself in confusion, and the people loved him all the better. He had worthily represented America in Europe. In that young community a man who brings home with him abundant European testimonials is still treated with respect (I have found American writers, of wide-world reputation, strangely solicitous about the opinions of quite obscure British critics, and elated or depressed by their judgments); and Irving went home medalled by the King, diplomatized by the university, crowned and honored and admired. He had not in any way intrigued for his honors, he had fairly won them; and, in Irving's instance, as in others, the old country was glad and eager to pay them.

In America the love and regard for Irving was a national sentiment. Party wars are perpetually raging there, and are carried on by the press with a rancor and fierceness against individuals which exceed British, almost Irish, virulence. It

seemed to me, during a year's travel in the country, as if no one ever aimed a blow at Irving. All men held their hand from that harmless, friendly peacemaker. I had the good fortune to see him at New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington,[3] and remarked how in every place he was honored and welcome. Every large city has its "Irving House." The country takes pride in the fame of its men of letters. The gate of his own charming little domain on the beautiful Hudson River was forever swinging before visitors who came to him. He shut out no one.[4] I had seen many pictures of his house, and read descriptions of it, in both of which it was treated with a not unusual American exaggeration. It was but a pretty little cabin of a place; the gentleman of the press who took notes of the place, whilst his kind old host was sleeping, might have visited the whole house in a couple of minutes.

And how came it that this house was so small, when Mr. Irving's books were sold by hundreds of thousands, nay, millions; when his profits were known to be large, and the habits of life of the good old bachelor were notoriously modest and simple? He had loved once in life. The lady he loved died; and he, whom all the world loved, never sought to replace her. I can't say how much the thought of that fidelity has touched me. Does not the very cheerfulness of his after-life add to the pathos of that untold story? To grieve always was not in his nature; or, when he had his sorrow, to bring all the world in to condole with him and bemoan it. Deep and quiet he lays the love of his heart, and buries it; and grass and flowers grow over the scarred ground in due time.

Irving had such a small house and such narrow rooms, because there was a great number of people to occupy them. He could only afford to keep one old horse (which, lazy and aged as it was, managed once or twice to run away with that careless

[3] At Washington, Mr. Irving came to a lecture given by the writer, which Mr. Fillmore and General Pierce, the President and President-elect, were also kind enough to attend together. "Two Kings of Brentford smelling at one rose," says Irving, looking up with his good-humored smile.

[4] Mr. Irving described to me, with that humor and good-humor which he always kept, how, amongst other visitors, a member of the British press, who had carried his distinguished pen to America (where he employed it in vilifying his own country), came to Sunnyside, introduced himself to Irving, partook of his wine and luncheon, and in two days described Mr. Irving, his house, his nieces, his meal, and his manner of dozing afterward, in a New York paper. On another occasion, Irving said, laughing: "Two persons came to me, and one held me in conversation whilst the other miscreant took my portrait!"

old horseman). He could only afford to give plain sherry to that amiable British paragraph-monger from New York, who saw the patriarch asleep over his modest, blameless cup, and fetched the public into his private chamber to look at him. Irving could only live very modestly, because the wifeless, childless man had a number of children to whom he was as a father. He had as many as nine nieces, I am told—I saw two of these ladies at his house—with all of whom the dear old man had shared the produce of his labor and genius.

"Be a good man, my dear!" One can't but think of these last words of the veteran chief of letters, who had tasted and tested the value of worldly success, admiration, prosperity. Was Irving not good, and, of his works, was not his life the best part? In his family, gentle, generous, good-humored, affectionate, self-denying; in society, a delightful example of complete gentlemanhood; quite unspoiled by prosperity; never obsequious to the great (or, worse still, to the base and mean, as some public men are forced to be in his and other countries); eager to acknowledge every contemporary's merit; always kind and affable to the young members of his calling; in his professional bargains and mercantile dealings delicately honest and grateful; one of the most charming masters of our lighter language; the constant friend to us and our nation; to men of letters doubly dear, not for his wit and genius merely, but as an exemplar of goodness, probity, and pure life. I don't know what sort of testimonial will be raised to him in his own country, where generous and enthusiastic acknowledgment of American merit is never wanting: but Irving was in our service as well as theirs; and as they have placed a stone at Greenwich yonder in memory of that gallant young Bellot, who shared the perils and fate of some of our Arctic seamen, I would like to hear of some memorial raised by English writers and friends of letters in affectionate remembrance of the dear and good Washington Irving.

As for the other writer, whose departure many friends, some few most dearly loved relatives, and multitudes of admiring readers deplore, our republic has already decreed his statue, and he must have known that he had earned his posthumous honor. He is not a poet and man of letters merely, but citizen, statesman, a great British worthy. Almost from the first mo-

ment when he appears, amongst boys, amongst college students, amongst men, he is marked, and takes rank as a great Englishman. All sorts of successes are easy to him; as a lad he goes down into the arena with others, and wins all the prizes to which he has a mind. A place in the Senate is straightway offered to the young man. He takes his seat there; he speaks, when so minded, without party anger or intrigue, but not without party faith and a sort of heroic enthusiasm for his cause. Still he is poet and philosopher even more than orator. That he may have leisure and means to pursue his darling studies, he absents himself for a while, and accepts a richly remunerative post in the East. As learned a man may live in a cottage or a college common-room; but it always seemed to me that ample means and recognized rank were Macaulay's as of right. Years ago there was a wretched outcry raised because Mr. Macaulay dated a letter from Windsor Castle, where he was staying. Immortal gods! Was this man not a fit guest for any palace in the world? or a fit companion for any man or woman in it? I dare say, after Austerlitz, the old K.K. court officials and footmen sneered at Napoleon for dating from Schönbrunn. But that miserable "Windsor Castle" outcry is an echo out of fast-retreating Old-World remembrances. The place of such a natural chief was amongst the first of the land; and that country is best, according to our British notion at least, where the man of eminence has the best chance of investing his genius and intellect.

If a company of giants were got together, very likely one or two of the mere six-feet-six people might be angry at the incontestable superiority of the very tallest of the party; and so I have heard some London wits, rather peevish at Macaulay's superiority, complain that he occupied too much of the talk, and so forth. Now that wonderful tongue is to speak no more, will not many a man grieve that he no longer has the chance to listen? To remember the talk is to wonder; to think not only of the treasures he had in his memory, but of the trifles he had stored there, and could produce with equal readiness. Almost on the last day I had the fortune to see him, a conversation happened suddenly to spring up about senior wranglers, and what they had done in after-life. To the almost terror of the persons present, Macaulay began with the senior

wrangler of 1801–2–3–4, and so on, giving the name of each, and relating his subsequent career and rise. Every man who has known him has his story regarding that astonishing memory. It may be that he was not ill-pleased that you should recognize it; but to those prodigious intellectual feats, which were so easy to him, who would grudge his tribute of homage? His talk was, in a word, admirable, and we admired it.

Of the notices which have appeared regarding Lord Macaulay, up to the day when the present lines are written (the 9th of January), the reader should not deny himself the pleasure of looking especially at two. It is a good sign of the times when such articles as these (I mean the articles in "The Times" and "Saturday Review") appear in our public prints about our public men. They educate us, as it were, to admire rightly. An uninstructed person in a museum or at a concert may pass by without recognizing a picture or a passage of music, which the connoisseur by his side may show him is a masterpiece of harmony, or a wonder of artistic skill. After reading these papers, you like and respect more the person you have admired so much already. And so with regard to Macaulay's style there may be faults, of course—what critic can't point them out? But for the nonce we are not talking about faults; we want to say *nil nisi bonum*. Well, take at hazard any three pages of the "Essays" or "History," and, glimmering below the stream of the narrative, as it were, you, an average reader, see one, two, three, a half-score of allusions to other historic facts, characters, literature, poetry, with which you are acquainted. Why is this epithet used? Whence is that simile drawn? How does he manage, in two or three words, to paint an individual, or to indicate a landscape? Your neighbor, who has his reading, and his little stock of literature stowed away in his mind, shall detect more points, allusions, happy touches, indicating not only the prodigious memory and vast learning of this master, but the wonderful history, the honest, humble previous toil of this great scholar. He reads twenty books to write a sentence; he travels a hundred miles to make a line of description.

Many Londoners—not all—have seen the British Museum Library. I speak *à cœur ouvert*, and pray the kindly reader to bear with me. I have seen all sorts of domes of Peters and

Pauls, Sophia, Pantheon—what not?—and have been struck by none of them so much as by that catholic dome in Bloomsbury, under which our million volumes are housed. What peace, what love, what truth, what beauty, what happiness for all, what generous kindness for you and me, are here spread out! It seems to me one cannot sit down in that place without a heart full of grateful reverence. I own to have said my grace at the table, and to have thanked heaven for this my English birthright, freely to partake of these bountiful books, and to speak the truth I find there. Under the dome which held Macaulay's brain, and from which his solemn eyes looked out on the world but a fortnight since, what a vast, brilliant, and wonderful store of learning was ranged! what strange lore would he not fetch for you at your bidding! A volume of law or history, a book of poetry familiar or forgotten (except by himself who forgot nothing), a novel ever so old, and he had it at hand. I spoke to him once about "Clarissa." "Not read 'Clarissa'!" he cried out. "If you have once thoroughly entered on 'Clarissa' and are infected by it, you can't leave it. When I was in India I passed one hot season at the hills, and there were the Governor-General, and the Secretary of Government, and the Commander-in-Chief, and their wives. I had 'Clarissa' with me; and, as soon as they began to read, the whole station was in a passion of excitement about Miss Harlowe and her misfortunes, and her scoundrelly Lovelace! The Governor's wife seized the book, and the Secretary waited for it, and the Chief Justice could not read it for tears!" He acted the whole scene; he paced up and down the Athenæum library; I dare say he could have spoken pages of the book—of that book, and of what countless piles of others!

In this little paper let us keep to the text of *nil nisi bonum*. One paper I have read regarding Lord Macaulay says "he had no heart." Why, a man's books may not always speak the truth, but they speak his mind in spite of himself; and it seems to me this man's heart is beating through every page he penned. He is always in a storm of revolt and indignation against wrong, craft, tyranny. How he cheers heroic resistance; how he backs and applauds freedom struggling for its own; how he hates scoundrels, ever so victorious and successful; how he recognizes genius, though selfish villains possess it! The critic

who says Macaulay had no heart, might say that Johnson had none, and two more generous, and more loving, and more hating, and more partial, and more noble, do not live in our history. Those who knew Lord Macaulay knew how admirably tender and generous[5] and affectionate he was. It was not his business to bring his family before the theatre footlights, and call for bouquets from the gallery as he wept over them.

If any young man of letters reads this little sermon—and to him, indeed, it is addressed—I would say to him: "Bear Scott's words in your mind, and 'be good, my dear!'" Here are two literary men gone to their account, and, *laus Deo*, as far as we know, it is fair, and open, and clean. Here is no need for apologies for shortcomings, or explanations of vices which would have been virtues but for unavoidable *etc.* Here are two examples of men most differently gifted: each pursuing his calling; each speaking his truth as God bade him; each honest in his life; just and irreproachable in his dealings; dear to his friends; honored by his country; beloved at his fireside. It has been the fortunate lot of both to give incalculable happiness and delight to the world, which thanks them in return with an immense kindliness, respect, affection. It may not be our chance, brother scribe, to be endowed with such merit, or rewarded with such fame. But the rewards of these men are rewards paid to our service. We may not win the baton or epaulettes; but God give us strength to guard the honor of the flag!

[5] Since the above was written, I have been informed that it has been found, on examining Lord Macaulay's papers, that he was in the habit of giving away more than a fourth part of his annual income.

OLD LAMPS FOR NEW ONES

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BY

CHARLES DICKENS

CHARLES DICKENS

1812—1870

Charles Dickens was born at Portsmouth, England, in 1812. His father, who had a position in the Navy Pay Office, removed soon after to Chatham, and in 1821 to London. The son, after a childhood passed in hardships and privations, was placed in a lawyer's office; but, attracted by the charms of literature, he began to write and report for newspapers. His reputation as a novelist and humorist began with the publication of the "Sketches by Boz" in 1836, and was greatly increased by the appearance in the following year of the famous "Pickwick Papers." These were followed by the long series of tales, the titles of which are household words wherever the English language is spoken. In 1841 he visited America, and visited Italy three years later. On the establishment of the "Daily News" he was appointed chief editor. In 1856 he originated "Household Words." In the same year he took up his residence at Gad's Hill, which was his home till his death. In 1859 he started and edited the well-known periodical "All the Year Round," to which he was also a frequent contributor. He visited America a second time in 1867. During his later years he gave public readings of his own works, which, however, his health compelled him to discontinue in March, 1870. Genial and generous to a rare degree, and remarkable for his business-like punctuality, his sagacity, and integrity, he was as warmly beloved by his personal friends as he was admired by his readers. He took a warm interest in the social and philanthropic movements of the day, and both in his books and public speeches eloquently exposed and denounced many wrongs and shams. Of his very numerous works it may suffice to name here, in addition to those already mentioned, and in the order of their publication, "Oliver Twist," "Nicholas Nickleby," "Master Humphrey's Clock," "American Notes" (which brought on him some violent attacks), "Martin Chuzzlewit," "Dombey and Son," "David Copperfield" (confessedly his own favorite of all his works), "Hard Times," "Great Expectations," and "Our Mutual Friend." The first in the series of his short Christmas stories appeared in 1843. His "Child's History of England" appeared in "Household Words," and was separately published in 1852-53. At the time of his death he was engaged in writing "Edwin Drood," which now remains a fragment. He was married in 1836. He died at Gad's Hill, on June 9, 1870.

"Old Lamps for New Ones" is the titular essay in a volume of his humorous essays that were collected from various magazines and newspapers and republished after his death. In his shorter prose writings Dickens showed the same qualities that are found in his novels—remarkable powers of observation, and great skill in communicating what he had observed, a keen sense of the ludicrous, exuberant humor, and a strong vein of pathos. His style is unaffected, fluent, and terse, and is characterized by great dramatic and descriptive powers. His work in literature has been aptly compared to that of Hogarth in painting.

OLD LAMPS FOR NEW ONES

THE magician in "Aladdin" may possibly have neglected the study of men for the study of alchemical books; but it is certain that in spite of his profession he was no conjuror. He knew nothing of human nature, or the everlasting set of the current of human affairs. If, when he fraudulently sought to obtain possession of the wonderful lamp, and went up and down, disguised, before the flying palace, crying "New lamps for old ones," he had reversed his cry, and made it "Old lamps for new ones," he would have been so far before his time as to have projected himself into the nineteenth century of our Christian era.

This age is so perverse, and is so very short of faith—in consequence, as some suppose, of there having been a run on that bank for a few generations—that a parallel and beautiful idea, generally known among the ignorant as the Young England hallucination, unhappily expired before it could run alone, to the great grief of a small but a very select circle of mourners. There is something so fascinating, to a mind capable of any serious reflection, in the notion of ignoring all that has been done for the happiness and elevation of mankind during three or four centuries of slow and dearly bought amelioration, that we have always thought it would tend soundly to the improvement of the general public, if any tangible symbol, any outward and visible sign, expressive of that admirable conception, could be held up before them. We are happy to have found such a sign at last; and although it would make a very different sign, indeed, in the licensed victualling sense of the word, and would probably be rejected with contempt and horror by any Christian publication, it has our warmest philosophical appreciation.

In the fifteenth century a certain feeble lamp of art arose in the Italian town of Urbino. This poor light, Raphael Sanzio by name, better known to a few miserably mistaken wretches in

these later days as Raphael (another burned at the same time, called Titian), was fed with a preposterous idea of beauty—with a ridiculous power of etherealizing, and exalting to the very Heaven of heavens what was most sublime and lovely in the expression of the human face divine on Earth—with the truly contemptible conceit of finding in poor humanity the fallen likeness of the angels of God, and raising it up again to their pure spiritual condition. This very fantastic whim effected a low revolution in art, in this wise, that beauty came to be regarded as one of its indispensable elements. In this very poor delusion, artists have continued until this present nineteenth century, when it was reserved for some bold aspirants to "put it down."

The Pre-Raphael brotherhood, ladies and gentlemen, is the dread tribunal which is to set this matter right. Walk up, walk up; and here, conspicuous on the wall of the Royal Academy of Art in England, in the eighty-second year of their annual exhibition, you shall see what this new holy brotherhood, this terrible police that is to disperse all Post-Raphael offenders, has "been and done!"

You come—in this Royal Academy exhibition, which is familiar with the works of Wilkie, Collins, Elty, Eastlake, Mulready, Leslie, Maclise, Turner, Stanfield, Landseer, Roberts, Danby, Creswick, Lee, Webster, Herbert, Dyce, Cope, and others who would have been renowned as great masters in any age or country—you come, in this place, to the contemplation of a Holy Family. You will have the goodness to discharge from your minds all Post-Raphael ideas, all religious aspirations, all elevating thoughts; all tender, awful, sorrowful, ennobling, sacred, graceful, or beautiful associations; and to prepare yourselves, as befits such a subject—Pre-Raphaelly considered—for the lowest depths of what is mean, odious, repulsive, and revolting.

You behold the interior of a carpenter's shop. In the foreground of that carpenter's shop is a hideous, wry-necked, blubbering, red-headed boy, in a bed-gown; who appears to have received a poke in the hand from the stick of another boy with whom he has been playing in an adjacent gutter, and to be holding it up for the contemplation of a kneeling woman, so horrible in her ugliness, that (supposing it were possible for

any human creature to exist for a moment with that dislocated throat) she would stand out from the rest of the company as a monster, in the vilest cabaret in France, or the lowest gin-shop in England. Two almost naked carpenters, master and journeyman, worthy companions of this agreeable female, are working at their trade; a boy, with some small flavor of humanity in him, is entering with a vessel of water; and nobody is paying any attention to a snuffy old woman who seems to have mistaken that shop for the tobacconist's next door, and to be hopelessly waiting at the counter to be served with half an ounce of her favorite mixture. Wherever it is possible to express ugliness of feature, limb, or attitude, you have it expressed. Such men as the carpenters might be undressed in any hospital where dirty drunkards, in a high state of varicose veins, are received. Their very toes have walked out of Saint Giles's.

This, is the nineteenth century, and in the eighty-second year of the annual exhibition of the National Academy of Art, is the Pre-Raphael representation to us, ladies and gentlemen, of the most solemn passage which our minds can ever approach. This, in the nineteenth century, and in the eighty-second year of the annual exhibition of the National Academy of Art, is what Pre-Raphael art can do to render reverence and homage to the faith in which we live and die! Consider this picture well. Consider the pleasure we should have in a similar Pre-Raphael rendering of a favorite horse, or dog, or cat; and, coming fresh from a pretty considerable turmoil about desecration in connection with the national post-office, let us extol this great achievement, and commend the National Academy!

In further considering this symbol of the great retrogressive principle, it is particularly gratifying to observe that such objects as the shavings which are strewn on the carpenter's floor are admirably painted; and that the Pre-Raphael brother is indisputably accomplished in the manipulation of this art. It is gratifying to observe this, because the fact involves no low effort at notoriety; everybody knowing that it is by no means easier to call attention to a very indifferent pig with five legs, than to a symmetrical pig with four. Also, because it is good to know that the National Academy thoroughly feels and comprehends the high range and exalted purposes of art; distinctly perceives that art includes something more than the

faithful portraiture of shavings, or the skilful coloring of drapery—imperatively requires, in short that it shall be informed with mind and sentiment; will on no account reduce it to a narrow question of trade-juggling with a palette, palette-knife, and paint-box. It is likewise pleasing to reflect that the great educational establishment foresees the difficulty into which it would be led by attaching greater weight to mere handicraft, than to any other consideration—even to considerations of common reverence or decency; which absurd principle, in the event of a skilful painter of the figure becoming a very little more perverted in his taste than certain skilful painters are just now, might place Her Gracious Majesty in a very painful position, one of these fine private view days.

Would it were in our power to congratulate our readers on the hopeful prospects of the great retrogressive principle, of which this thoughtful picture is the sign and emblem! Would that we could give our readers encouraging assurance of a healthy demand for old lamps in exchange for new ones, and a steady improvement in the old-lamp market! The perversity of mankind is such, and the untoward arrangements of Providence are such, that we cannot lay that flattering unction to their souls. We can only report what brotherhoods, stimulated by this sign, are forming; and what opportunities will be presented to the people, if the people will but accept them.

In the first place, the Pre-Perspective brotherhood will be presently incorporated, for the subversion of all known rules and principles of perspective. It is intended to swear every P.P.B. to a solemn renunciation of the art of perspective on a soup-plate of the willow pattern; and we may expect, on the occasion of the eighty-third annual exhibition of the Royal Academy of Art in England, to see some pictures by this pious brotherhood, realizing Hogarth's idea of a man on a mountain several miles off, lighting his pipe at the upper window of a house in the foreground. But we are informed that every brick in the house will be a portrait; that the man's boots will be copied with the utmost fidelity from a pair of Bluchers, sent up out of Northamptonshire for the purpose; and that the texture of his hands (including four chilblains, a whitlow, and ten dirty nails) will be a triumph of the painter's art.

A society, to be called the Pre-Newtonian brotherhood, was

lately projected by a young gentleman under articles to a civil engineer, who objected to being considered bound to conduct himself according to the laws of gravitation. But this young gentleman, being reproached by some aspiring companions with the timidity of his conception, has abrogated that idea in favor of a Pre-Galileo brotherhood now flourishing, who distinctly refuse to perform any annual revolution round the sun, and have arranged that the world shall not do so any more. The course to be taken by the Royal Academy of Art in reference to this brotherhood is not yet decided upon; but it is whispered that some other large educational institutions in the neighborhood of Oxford are nearly ready to pronounce in favor of it.

Several promising students connected with the Royal College of Surgeons have held a meeting, to protest against the circulation of the blood, and to pledge themselves to treat all the patients they can get on principles condemnatory of that innovation. A Pre-Harvey brotherhood is the result, from which a great deal may be expected by the undertakers.

In literature, a very spirited effort has been made, which is no less than the formation of a P.G.A.P.C.B., or Pre-Gower and Pre-Chaucer brotherhood, for the restoration of the ancient English style of spelling, and the weeding out from all libraries, public and private, of those and all later pretenders, particularly a person of loose character named Shakespeare. It having been suggested, however, that this happy idea could scarcely be considered complete while the art of printing was permitted to remain unmolested, another society, under the name of the Pre-Laurentius brotherhood, has been established in connection with it, for the abolition of all but manuscript books. These Mr. Pugin has engaged to supply, in characters that nobody on earth shall be able to read. And it is confidently expected by those who have seen the House of Lords that he will faithfully redeem his pledge.

In music, a retrogressive step, in which there is much hope, has been taken. The P.A.B., or Pre-Agincourt brotherhood has arisen, nobly devoted to consign to oblivion Mozart, Beethoven, Handel, and every other such ridiculous reputation, and to fix its millennium (as its name implies) before the date of the first regular musical composition known to have been achieved in England. As this institution has not yet commenced active

operations, it remains to be seen whether the Royal Academy of Music will be a worthy sister of the Royal Academy of Art, and admit this enterprising body to its orchestra. We have it on the best authority that its compositions will be quite as rough and discordant as the real old original—that it will be, in a word, exactly suited to the pictorial art we have endeavored to describe. We have strong hopes, therefore, that the Royal Academy of Music, not wanting an example, may not want courage.

The regulation of social matters, as separated from the fine arts, has been undertaken by the Pre-Henry-the-Seventh brotherhood, who date from the same period as the Pre-Raphael brotherhood. This society, as cancelling all the advances of nearly four hundred years and reverting to one of the most disagreeable periods of English history, when the nation was yet very slowly emerging from barbarism, and when gentle female foreigners, come over to be the wives of Scottish kings, wept bitterly (as well they might) at being left alone among the savage Court, must be regarded with peculiar favor. As the time of ugly religious caricatures (called mysteries), it is thoroughly Pre-Raphael in its spirit; and may be deemed the twin brother to that great society. We should be certain of the plague among many other advantages, if this brotherhood were properly encouraged.

All these brotherhoods, and any other society of the like kind, now in being or yet to be, have at once a guiding star, and a reduction of their great ideas to something palpable and obvious to the senses, in the sign to which we take the liberty of directing their attention. We understand that it is in the contemplation of each society to become possessed, with all convenient speed, of a collection of such pictures; and that once, every year, to wit, upon the first of April, the whole intend to amalgamate in a high festival, to be called the Convocation of Eternal Boobies.

ON THE ART OF LIVING WITH OTHERS

—

BY

ARTHUR HELPS

SIR ARTHUR HELPS

1813—1875

Sir Arthur Helps was born in 1813, educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated B.A. in 1838, and having been successively private secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Lord Monteagle) and to the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Lord Morpeth), he was appointed clerk of the Privy Council in the year 1859. His works include "Thoughts in the Cloister and the Crowd," 1835; "Essays Written in the Interval of Business," 1841; "King Henry II," a historical drama, and "Catharine Douglas," a tragedy, 1843; "The Claims of Labor," 1844; "Friends in Council," a series of readings and discourses, 1847; "Companions of My Solitude," 1851; "Conquerors of the New World, and Their Bondsmen," two volumes, 1848-52; "History of the Spanish Conquest of America," 1855; a second series of "Friends in Council," 1859; "Realmah," 1868; "The Life of Pizarro," 1869; "Casimir Maremma" and "Brevia, or Short Essays," in 1870; "Conversations on War and General Culture," "The Life of Hernando Cortes and the Conquest of Mexico," and "Thoughts upon Government," in 1871; in 1872, the "Life of Mr. Brassey the Engineer." His essays and dialogues evince a fine moral feeling and discriminating taste. They have all gone through numerous editions, and their purity of expression, as well as justness of thought, must have had a beneficial effect on many minds. Sir Arthur Helps died on March 7, 1875.

ON THE ART OF LIVING WITH OTHERS

THE "Iliad" for war; the "Odyssey" for wandering; but where is the great domestic epic? Yet it is but commonplace to say that passions may rage round a tea-table which would not have misbecome men dashing at one another in war chariots; and evolutions of patience and temper are performed at the fireside, worthy to be compared with the Retreat of the Ten Thousand. Men have worshipped some fantastic being for living alone in a wilderness; but social martyrdoms place no saints upon the calendar.

We may blind ourselves to it if we like, but the hatreds and disgusts that there are behind friendship, relationship, service, and, indeed, proximity of all kinds, is one of the darkest spots upon earth. The various relations of life, which bring people together, cannot, as we know, be perfectly fulfilled except in a state where there will, perhaps, be no occasion for any of them. It is no harm, however, to endeavor to see whether there are any methods which make these relations in the least degree more harmonious now.

In the first place, if people are to live happily together, they must not fancy, because they are thrown together now, that all their lives have been exactly similar up to the present time, that they started exactly alike, and that they are to be for the future of the same mind. A thorough conviction of the difference of men is the great thing to be assured of in social knowledge: it is to life what Newton's law is to astronomy. Sometimes men have a knowledge of it with regard to the world in general: they do not expect the outer world to agree with them in all points, but are vexed at not being able to drive their own tastes and opinions into those they live with. Diversities distress them. They will not see that there are many forms of virtue and wisdom. Yet we might as well say: "Why all these stars; why this difference; why not all one star?"

Many of the rules for people living together in peace follow from the above. For instance, not to interfere unreasonably with others, not to ridicule their tastes, not to question and requestion their resolves, not to indulge in perpetual comment on their proceedings, and to delight in their having other pursuits than ours, are all based upon a thorough perception of the simple fact that they are not we.

Another rule for living happily with others is to avoid having stock subjects of disputation. It mostly happens, when people live much together, that they come to have certain set topics, around which, from frequent dispute, there is such a growth of angry words, mortified vanity, and the like, that the original subject of difference becomes a standing subject for quarrel; and there is a tendency in all minor disputes to drift down to it.

Again, if people wish to live well together, they must not hold too much to logic, and suppose that everything is to be settled by sufficient reason. Dr. Johnson saw this clearly with regard to married people, when he said: "Wretched would be the pair above all names of wretchedness, who should be doomed to adjust by reason every morning all the minute detail of a domestic day." But the application should be much more general than he made it. There is no time for such reasonings, and nothing that is worth them. And when we recollect how two lawyers, or two politicians, can go on contending, and that there is no end of one-sided reasoning on any subject, we shall not be sure that such contention is the best mode for arriving at truth. But certainly it is not the way to arrive at good temper.

If you would be loved as a companion, avoid unnecessary criticism upon those with whom you live. The number of people who have taken out judges' patents for themselves is very large in any society. Now it would be hard for a man to live with another who was always criticising his actions, even if it were kindly and just criticism. It would be like living between the glasses of a microscope. But these self-elected judges, like their prototypes, are very apt to have the persons they judge brought before them in the guise of culprits.

One of the most provoking forms of the criticism above

alluded to is that which may be called criticism over the shoulder. "Had I been consulted," "Had you listened to me," "But you always will," and such short scraps of sentences may remind many of us of dissertations which we have suffered and inflicted, and of which we cannot call to mind any soothing effect.

Another rule is, not to let familiarity swallow up all courtesy. Many of us have a habit of saying to those with whom we live such things as we say about strangers behind their backs. There is no place, however, where real politeness is of more value than where we mostly think it would be superfluous. You may say more truth, or rather speak out more plainly, to your associates, but not less courteously, than you do to strangers.

Again, we must not expect more from the society of our friends and companions than it can give; and especially must not expect contrary things. It is somewhat arrogant to talk of travelling over other minds (mind being, for what we know, infinite): but still we become familiar with the upper views, tastes, and tempers of our associates. And it is hardly in man to estimate justly what is familiar to him. In travelling along at night, as Hazlitt says, we catch a glimpse into cheerful-looking rooms with light blazing in them, and we conclude, involuntarily, how happy the inmates must be. Yet there is heaven and hell in those rooms, the same heaven and hell that we have known in others.

There are two great classes of promoters of social happiness; cheerful people, and people who have some reticence. The latter are more secure benefits to society even than the former. They are non-conductors of all the heats and animosities around them. To have peace in a house, or a family, or any social circle, the members of it must beware of passing on hasty and uncharitable speeches, which, the whole of the context seldom being told, is often not conveying but creating mischief. They must be very good people to avoid doing this; for let human nature say what it will, it likes sometimes to look on at a quarrel; and that, not altogether from ill-nature, but from a love of excitement—for the same reason that Charles II liked to attend the debates in the Lords, because they were "as good as a play."

We come now to the consideration of temper, which might have been expected to be treated first. But to cut off the means and causes of bad-temper is, perhaps, of as much importance as any direct dealing with the temper itself. Besides, it is probable that in small social circles there is more suffering from unkindness than ill-temper. Anger is a thing that those who live under us suffer more from than those who live with us. But all the forms of ill-humor and sour-sensitiveness, which especially belong to equal intimacy (though indeed they are common to all), are best to be met by impassiveness. When two sensitive persons are shut up together, they go on vexing each other with a reproductive irritability.[1] But sensitive and hard people get on well together. The supply of temper is not altogether out of the usual laws of supply and demand.

Intimate friends and relations should be careful when they go out into the world together, or admit others to their own circle, that they do not make a bad use of the knowledge which they have gained of each other by their intimacy. Nothing is more common than this, and did it not mostly proceed from mere carelessness it would be superlatively ungenerous. You seldom need wait for the written life of a man to hear about his weaknesses, or what are supposed to be such, if you know his intimate friends, or meet him in company with them.

Lastly, in conciliating those we live with, it is most surely done, not by consulting their interests, nor by giving way to their opinions, so much as by not offending their tastes. The most refined part of us lies in this region of taste, which is perhaps a result of our whole being rather than a part of our nature, and at any rate is the region of our most subtle sympathies and antipathies.

It may be said that if the great principles of Christianity

[1] Madame Necker de Saussure's maxim about firmness with children has suggested the above. "*Ce qui plie ne peut servir d'appui, et l'enfant veut être appuyé. Non-seulement il en a besoin, mais il le désire, mais sa tendresse la plus constante n'est qu'à ce prix. Si vous lui faites l'effet d'un autre enfant, si vous partagez ses passions, ses vacillations continuelles, si vous lui rendez tous ses mouvements en les augmentant, soit par la contrariété, soit par un excès de complaisance, il pourra se servir de vous comme d'un jouet, mais non être heureux en votre présence; il pleurera, se mutinera, et bientôt le souvenir d'un temps de désordre et d'humeur se liera avec votre idée. Vous n'avez pas été le soutien de votre enfant, vous ne l'avez pas préservé de cette fluctuation perpétuelle de la volonté, maladie des êtres faibles et livrés à une imagination vive; vous n'avez assuré ni sa paix, ni sa sagesse, ni son bonheur, pourquoi vous croirait-il sa mère.*" — "L'Education Progressive," vol. 1, p. 228.

were attended to, all such rules, suggestions, and observations as the above would be needless. True enough! Great principles are at the bottom of all things; but to apply them to daily life, many little rules, precautions, and insights are needed. Such things hold a middle place between real life and principles, as form does between matter and spirit: moulding the one and expressing the other.

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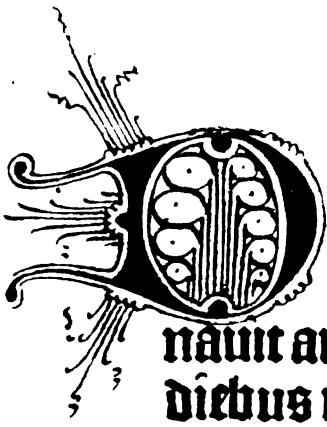
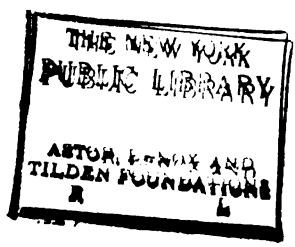


Dilexi: qm̄ Allelutia
exaudiet dn̄s vocē ora-
tionis mee Quia incli
nauit aurem suam michi: ⁊ in
diebus meis inuocabo. Circū
dederunt me dolores mortis:
et pericula inferni inuenerunt
me. Tribulationem et dolorē
inueni: et nomen dom̄i inuoca-
ui. O dn̄e libera aīam meā: mi-
sericors dn̄s et iustus: et de⁹ no-
ster miseret. Custodiens par
uulos dn̄s: humiliat⁹ sum ⁊ li
berauit me. Conuertere aīa me
a in requiem tuā: q̄a dn̄s bene-
fecit tibi Quia eripuit aīam me-
ā de morte: oc̄los meos a lacri-
mis: pedes meos a lapsu. Pla-
cebo dn̄o: in regione viuorum.
Alleluia Alleluia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THE SCIENCE OF HISTORY

—

BY

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

1818—1894

James Anthony Froude was born in 1818, and was the son of Dr. Froude, archdeacon of Totness and rector of Dartington, Devonshire. He was educated at Westminster and at Oriel College, Oxford. In 1842 he carried off the chancellor's prize for an English essay, his subject being Political Economy, and the same year he became a Fellow of Exeter College. Mr. Froude appeared as an author in 1847, when he published "Shadows of the Clouds, by Zeta," consisting of two stories. Next year he produced "The Nemesis of Faith," a protest, as it has been called, against the reverence entertained by the church for what Mr. Froude called the Hebrew mythology. Such a work could not fail to offend the university authorities. Froude was deprived of his Fellowship, and also forfeited a situation to which he had been appointed in Tasmania. He then set to periodical writing, and contributed to the "Westminster Review" and "Fraser's Magazine": of the latter he was editor for some time. His reputation was extended by "The History of England, from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth," the twelve volumes of which appeared at intervals from 1856 to 1869. He also wrote occasional pamphlets and short historical dissertations. One of these, entitled "The Influence of the Reformation on the Scottish Character," being an address delivered before the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh, in 1865, attracted much attention, especially on account of its eulogy on John Knox, who, according to Froude, "saved the kirk which he had founded, and saved with it Scottish and English freedom." Another of these occasional addresses was one on Calvinism, delivered to the University of St. Andrews in 1869, which was given by Froude in his capacity of rector of that university. In 1867 he issued two volumes of "Short Studies on Great Subjects," and a third volume was issued in 1877.

In 1874 and again in 1875 Froude went on a diplomatic mission to the South African colonies of Great Britain. On his return to England he published "Cæsar: A Sketch," in 1879; "Thomas Carlyle," in 1882; and "Spanish Story of the Armada," in 1892. In 1892 he succeeded E. A. Freeman as professor of modern history at Oxford.

In a critical article on Froude's "History of England" the "Edinburgh Review" said: "The peculiar merit of Mr. Froude's work is its wealth of unpublished manuscripts; and the reign of Elizabeth is remarkably illustrated by the correspondence of the Spanish ambassadors and other agents of the Court of Simancas. The extraordinary interest of such illustrations is apparent in every page of these volumes; they give novelty to the narrative and variety to the well-known incidents of the time; and they bring in aid of historical evidence the contemporary opinions of society upon current events." Froude was a master of historical narrative, and his technical skill as a prose artist is amply set forth in "The Science of History" and his various other essays.

THE SCIENCE OF HISTORY

LADIES and Gentlemen—I have undertaken to speak to you this evening on what is called the Science of History.[1] I fear it is a dry subject; and there seems, indeed, something incongruous in the very connection of such words as Science and History. It is as if we were to talk of the color of sound, or the longitude of the rule-of-three Where it is so difficult to make out the truth on the commonest disputed fact in matters passing under our very eyes, how can we talk of a science in things long past, which come to us only through books? It often seems to me as if History was like a child's box of letters, with which we can spell any word we please. We have only to pick out such letters as we want, arrange them as we like, and say nothing about those which do not suit our purpose.

I will try to make the thing intelligible, and I will try not to weary you; but I am doubtful of my success either way. First, however, I wish to say a word or two about the eminent person whose name is connected with this way of looking at History, and whose premature death struck us all with such a sudden sorrow. Many of you, perhaps, recollect Mr. Buckle as he stood not so long ago in this place. He spoke more than an hour without a note—never repeating himself, never wasting words; laying out his matter as easily and as pleasantly as if he had been talking to us at his own fireside. We might think what we pleased of Mr. Buckle's views, but it was plain enough that he was a man of uncommon power; and he had qualities also—qualities to which he, perhaps, himself attached little value—as rare as they were admirable.

Most of us, when we have hit on something which we are

[1] This essay was originally delivered as a lecture at the Royal Institution on February 5, 1864.

pleased to think important and original, feel as if we should burst with it. We come out into the book-market with our wares in hand, and ask for thanks and recognition. Mr. Buckle, at an early age, conceived the thought which made him famous, but he took the measure of his abilities. He knew that whenever he pleased he could command personal distinction, but he cared more for his subject than for himself. He was contented to work with patient reticence, unknown and unheard of, for twenty years; and then, at middle life, he produced a work which was translated at once into French and German, and, of all places in the world, fluttered the dove-cotes of the Imperial Academy of St. Petersburg.

Goethe says somewhere that as soon as a man has done anything remarkable, there seems to be a general conspiracy to prevent him from doing it again. He is feasted, fêted, caressed; his time is stolen from him by breakfasts, dinners, societies, idle businesses of a thousand kinds. Mr. Buckle had his share of all this; but there are also more dangerous enemies that wait upon success like his. He had scarcely won for himself the place which he deserved, than his health was found shattered by his labors. He had but time to show us how large a man he was, time just to sketch the outlines of his philosophy, and he passed away as suddenly as he appeared. He went abroad to recover strength for his work, but his work was done with and over. He died of a fever at Damascus, vexed only that he was compelled to leave it uncompleted. Almost his last conscious words were: "My book, my book! I shall never finish my book!" He went away as he had lived, nobly careless of himself, and thinking only of the thing which he had undertaken to do.

But his labor had not been thrown away. Disagree with him as we might, the effect which he had already produced was unmistakable, and it is not likely to pass away. What he said was not essentially new. Some such interpretation of human things is as early as the beginning of thought. But Mr. Buckle, on the one hand, had the art which belongs to men of genius: he could present his opinions with peculiar distinctness; and, on the other hand, there is much in the mode of speculation at present current among us for which those opinions have an unusual fascination. They do not please

us, but they excite and irritate us. We are angry with them; and we betray, in being so, an uneasy misgiving that there may be more truth in those opinions than we like to allow.

Mr. Buckle's general theory was something of this kind: When human creatures began first to look about them in the world they lived in, there seemed to be no order in anything. Days and nights were not the same length. The air was sometimes hot and sometimes cold. Some of the stars rose and set like the sun; some were almost motionless in the sky; some described circles round a central star above the north horizon. The planets went on principles of their own; and in the elements there seemed nothing but caprice. Sun and moon would at times go out in eclipse. Sometimes the earth itself would shake under men's feet; and they could only suppose that earth and air and sky and water were inhabited and managed by creatures as wayward as themselves.

Time went on, and the disorder began to arrange itself. Certain influences seemed beneficent to men, others malignant and destructive; and the world was supposed to be animated by good spirits and evil spirits, who were continually fighting against each other, in outward nature and in human creatures themselves. Finally, as men observed more and imagined less, these interpretations gave way also. Phenomena the most opposite in effect were seen to be the result of the same natural law. The fire did not burn the house down if the owners of it were careful, but remained on the hearth and boiled the pot; nor did it seem more inclined to burn a bad man's house down than a good man's, provided the badness did not take the form of negligence. The phenomena of nature were found for the most part to proceed in an orderly, regular way, and their variations to be such as could be counted upon. From observing the order of things, the step was easy to cause and effect. An eclipse, instead of being a sign of the anger of Heaven, was found to be the necessary and innocent result of the relative position of sun, moon, and earth. The comets became bodies in space, unrelated to the beings who had imagined that all creation was watching them and their doings. By degrees caprice, volition, all symptoms of arbitrary action, disappeared out of the universe; and almost every phenomenon in earth or heaven was found attributable to some law,

either understood or perceived to exist. Thus nature was reclaimed from the imagination. The first fantastic conception of things gave way before the moral; the moral in turn gave way before the natural; and at last there was left but one small tract of jungle where the theory of law had failed to penetrate —the doings and characters of human creatures themselves.

There, and only there, amidst the conflicts of reason and emotion, conscience and desire, spiritual forces were still conceived to exist. Cause and effect were not traceable when there was a free volition to disturb the connection. In all other things, from a given set of conditions the consequences necessarily followed. With man, the word " law " changed its meaning; and instead of a fixed order, which he could not choose but follow, it became a moral precept, which he might disobey if he dared.

This it was which Mr. Buckle disbelieved. The economy which prevailed throughout nature, he thought it very unlikely should admit of this exception. He considered that human beings acted necessarily from the impulse of outward circumstances upon their mental and bodily condition at any given moment. Every man, he said, acted from a motive; and his conduct was determined by the motive which affected him most powerfully. Every man naturally desires what he supposes to be good for him; but, to do well, he must know well. He will eat poison so long as he does not know that it is poison. Let him see that it will kill him, and he will not touch it. The question was not of moral right and wrong. Once let him be thoroughly made to feel that the thing is destructive, and he will leave it alone by the law of his nature. His virtues are the result of knowledge; his faults, the necessary consequence of the want of it. A boy desires to draw. He knows nothing about it: he draws men like trees or houses, with their centre of gravity anywhere. He makes mistakes because he knows no better. We do not blame him. Till he is better taught, he cannot help it. But his instruction begins. He arrives at straight lines; then at solids; then at curves. He learns perspective, and light and shade. He observes more accurately the forms which he wishes to represent. He perceives effects, and he perceives the means by which they are produced. He has learned what to do; and, in part, he has

learned how to do it. His after-progress will depend on the amount of force which his nature possesses; but all this is as natural as the growth of an acorn. You do not preach to the acorn that it is its duty to become a large tree; you do not preach to the art-pupil that it is his duty to become a Holbein. You plant your acorn in favorable soil, where it can have light and air, and be sheltered from the wind; you remove the superfluous branches, you train the strength into the leading shoots. The acorn will then become as fine a tree as it has vital force to become. The difference between men and other things is only in the largeness and variety of man's capacities; and in this special capacity, that he alone has the power of observing the circumstances favorable to his own growth, and can apply them for himself, yet, again, with this condition—that he is not, as is commonly supposed, free to choose whether he will make use of these appliances or not. When he knows what is good for him, he will choose it; and he will judge what is good for him by the circumstances which have made him what he is.

And what he would do, Mr. Buckle supposed that he always had done. His history had been a natural growth as much as the growth of the acorn. His improvement had followed the progress of his knowledge; and, by a comparison of his outward circumstances with the condition of his mind, his whole proceedings on this planet, his creeds and constitutions, his good deeds and his bad, his arts and his sciences, his empires and his revolutions, would be found all to arrange themselves into clear relations of cause and effect.

If, when Mr. Buckle pressed his conclusions, we objected the difficulty of finding what the truth about past times really was, he would admit it candidly as far as concerned individuals; men. We might disagree about the character of Julius or but there was not the same difficulty, he said, with masses of Tiberius Cæsar, but we could know well enough the Romans of the Empire. We had their literature to tell us how they thought; we had their laws to tell us how they governed; we had the broad face of the world, the huge mountainous outline of their general doings upon it, to tell us how they acted. He believed it was all reducible to laws, and could be made as intelligible as the growth of the chalk cliffs or the coal measures.

And thus consistently Mr. Buckle cared little for individuals. He did not believe (as someone has said) that the history of mankind is the history of its great men. Great men with him were but larger atoms, obeying the same impulses with the rest, only perhaps a trifle more erratic. With them or without them, the course of things would have been much the same.

As an illustration of the truth of his view, he would point to the new science of political economy. Here already was a large area of human activity in which natural laws were found to act unerringly. Men had gone on for centuries trying to regulate trade on moral principles. They would fix wages according to some imaginary rule of fairness; they would fix prices by what they considered things ought to cost; they encouraged one trade or discouraged another, for moral reasons. They might as well have tried to work a steam-engine on moral reasons. The great statesmen whose names were connected with these enterprises might have as well legislated that water should run up-hill. There were natural laws, fixed in the conditions of things; and to contend against them was the old battle of the Titans against the gods.

As it was with political economy, so it was with all other forms of human activity; and as the true laws of political economy explained the troubles which people fell into in old times because they were ignorant of them, so the true laws of human nature, as soon as we knew them, would explain their mistakes in more serious matters, and enable us to manage better for the future. Geographical position, climate, air, soil, and the like, had their several influences. The northern nations are hardy and industrious, because they must till the earth if they would eat the fruits of it, and because the temperature is too low to make an idle life enjoyable. In the south, the soil is more productive, while less food is wanted and fewer clothes; and, in the exquisite air, exertion is not needed to make the sense of existence delightful. Therefore, in the south we find men lazy and indolent.

True, there are difficulties in these views; the home of the languid Italian was the home also of the sternest race of whom the story of mankind retains a record. And again, when we are told that the Spaniards are superstitious because Spain is a country of earthquakes, we remember Japan, the spot in all

the world where earthquakes are most frequent, and where at the same time there is the most serene disbelief in any supernatural agency whatsoever.

Moreover, if men grow into what they are by natural laws, they cannot help being what they are; and if they cannot help being what they are, a good deal will have to be altered in our general view of human obligations and responsibilities.

That, however, in these theories there is a great deal of truth, is quite certain, were there but a hope that those who maintain them would be contented with that admission. A man born in a Mahometan country grows up a Mahometan; in a Catholic country, a Catholic; in a Protestant country, a Protestant. His opinions are like language: he learns to think as he learns to speak; and it is absurd to suppose him responsible for being what nature makes him. We take pains to educate children. There is a good education and a bad education; there are rules well ascertained by which characters are influenced; and, clearly enough, it is no mere matter for a boy's free will whether he turns out well or ill. We try to train him into good habits; we keep him out of the way of temptations; we see that he is well taught; we mix kindness and strictness; we surround him with every good influence we can command. These are what are termed the advantages of a good education; and if we fail to provide those under our care with it, and if they go wrong, the responsibility we feel is as much ours as theirs. This is at once an admission of the power over us of outward circumstances.

In the same way, we allow for the strength of temptations, and the like.

In general, it is perfectly obvious that men do necessarily absorb, out of the influences in which they grow up, something which gives a complexion to their whole after-character.

When historians have to relate great social or speculative changes, the overthrow of a monarchy, or the establishment of a creed, they do but half their duty if they merely relate the events. In an account, for instance, of the rise of Mahometanism, it is not enough to describe the character of the Prophet, the ends which he set before him, the means which he made use of, and the effect which he produced; the historian must show what there was in the condition of the Eastern races

which enabled Mahomet to act upon them so powerfully; their existing beliefs, their existing moral and political condition.

In our estimate of the past, and in our calculations of the future, in the judgments which we pass upon one another, we measure responsibility, not by the thing done, but by the opportunities which people have had of knowing better or worse. In the efforts which we make to keep our children from bad associations or friends, we admit that external circumstances have a powerful effect in making men what they are.

But are circumstances everything? That is the whole question. A science of history, if it is more than a misleading name, implies that the relation between cause and effect holds in human things as completely as in all others; that the origin of human actions is not to be looked for in mysterious properties of the mind, but in influences which are palpable and ponderable.

When natural causes are liable to be set aside and neutralized by what is called volition, the word science is out of place. If it is free to man to choose what he will do or not do, there is no adequate science of him. If there is a science of him, there is no free choice, and the praise or blame with which we regard one another is impertinent and out of place.

I am trespassing upon these ethical grounds because, unless I do, the subject cannot be made intelligible. Mankind is but an aggregate of individuals; History is but the record of individual action: and what is true of the part is true of the whole.

We feel keenly about such things, and, when the logic becomes perplexing, we are apt to grow rhetorical about them. But rhetoric is only misleading. Whatever the truth may be, it is best that we should know it; and for truth of any kind we should keep our heads and hearts as cool as we can.

I will say at once, that, if we had the whole case before us; if we were taken, like Leibnitz's Tarquin, into the council-chamber of nature, and were shown what we really were, where we came from, and where we were going, however unpleasant it might be for some of us to find ourselves, like Tarquin, made into villains, from the subtle necessities of "the best of all possible worlds"—nevertheless, some such theory as Mr. Buckle's might possibly turn out to be true.

Likely enough, there is some great "equation of the universe" where the value of the unknown quantities can be determined. But we must treat things in relation to our own powers and positions, and the question is, whether the sweep of those vast curves can be measured by the intellect of creatures of a day like ourselves.

The Faust of Goethe, tired of the barren round of earthly knowledge, calls magic to his aid. He desires, first, to see the spirit of the Macrocosmos, but his heart fails him before he ventures that tremendous experiment, and he summons before him, instead, the spirit of his own race. There he feels himself at home. The stream of life and the storm of action, the everlasting ocean of existence, the web and the woof, and the roaring loom of Time—he gazes upon them all, and in passionate exultation claims fellowship with the awful thing before him. But the majestic vision fades, and a voice comes to him—"Thou art fellow with the spirits which thy mind can grasp, not with me."

Had Mr. Buckle tried to follow his principles into detail, it might have fared no better with him than with Faust.

What are the conditions of a science? and when may any subject be said to enter the scientific stage? I suppose when the facts begin to resolve themselves into groups; when phenomena are no longer isolated experiences, but appear in connection and order; when, after certain antecedents, certain consequences are uniformly seen to follow; when facts enough have been collected to furnish a basis for conjectural explanation; and when conjectures have so far ceased to be utterly vague that it is possible in some degree to foresee the future by the help of them.

Till a subject has advanced as far as this, to speak of a science of it is an abuse of language. It is not enough to say that there must be a science of human beings because there is a science of all other things. This is like saying the planets must be inhabited because the only planet of which we have any experience is inhabited. It may or may not be true, but it is not a practical question; it does not affect the practical treatment of the matter in hand.

Let us look at the history of astronomy.

So long as sun, moon, and planets were supposed to be gods

or angels; so long as the sword of Orion was not a metaphor, but a fact; and the groups of stars which inlaid the floor of heaven were the glittering trophies of the loves and wars of the Pantheon—so long there was no science of astronomy. There was fancy, imagination, poetry, perhaps reverence, but no science. As soon, however, as it was observed that the stars retained their relative places; that the times of their rising and setting varied with the seasons; that sun, moon, and planets moved among them in a plane, and the belt of the Zodiac was marked out and divided—then a new order of things began. Traces of the earlier stage remained in the names of the signs and constellations, just as the Scandinavian mythology survives now in the names of the days of the week; but, for all that, the understanding was now at work on the thing; science had begun, and the first triumph of it was the power of foretelling the future. Eclipses were perceived to recur in cycles of nineteen years, and philosophers were able to say when an eclipse was to be looked for. The periods of the planets were determined. Theories were invented to account for their eccentricities; and, false as those theories might be, the position of the planets could be calculated with moderate certainty by them. The very first result of the science, in its most imperfect stage, was a power of foresight; and this was possible before any one true astronomical law had been discovered.

We should not therefore question the possibility of a science of history because the explanations of its phenomena were rudimentary or imperfect: that they might be, and long continue to be, and yet enough might be done to show that there was such a thing, and that it was not entirely without use. But how was it that in those rude days, with small knowledge of mathematics, and with no better instruments than flat walls and dial-plates, those first astronomers made progress so considerable? Because, I suppose, the phenomena which they were observing recurred, for the most part, within moderate intervals; so that they could collect large experience within the compass of their natural lives; because days and months and years were measurable periods, and within them the more simple phenomena perpetually repeated themselves.

But how would it have been if, instead of turning on its

axis once in twenty-four hours, the earth had taken a year about it; if the year had been nearly four hundred years; if man's life had been no longer than it is, and for the initial steps of astronomy there had been nothing to depend upon except observations recorded in history? How many ages would have passed, had this been our condition, before it would have occurred to anyone that, in what he saw night after night, there was any kind of order at all?

We can see to some extent how it would have been, by the present state of those parts of the science which in fact depend on remote recorded observations. The movements of the comets are still extremely uncertain. The times of their return can be calculated only with the greatest vagueness.

And yet such a hypothesis as I have suggested would but inadequately express the position in which we are in fact placed toward history. There the phenomena never repeat themselves. There we are dependent wholly on the record of things said to have happened once, but which never happen or can happen a second time. There no experiment is possible; we can watch for no recurring fact to test the worth of our conjectures. It has been suggested fancifully, that, if we consider the universe to be infinite, time is the same as eternity, and the past is perpetually present. Light takes nine years to come to us from Sirius: those rays which we may see to-night, when we leave this place, left Sirius nine years ago; and could the inhabitants of Sirius see the earth at this moment, they would see the English army in the trenches before Sebastopol, Florence Nightingale watching at Scutari over the wounded at Inkermann, and the peace of England undisturbed by "Essays and Reviews."

As the stars recede into distance, so time recedes with them; and there may be, and probably are, stars from which Noah might be seen stepping into the ark, Eve listening to the temptation of the serpent, or that older race, eating the oysters and leaving the shell-heaps behind them, when the Baltic was an open sea.

Could we but compare notes, something might be done; but of this there is no present hope, and without it there will be no science of history. Eclipses, recorded in ancient books, can be verified by calculations, and lost dates can be recovered

by them; and we can foresee, by the laws which they follow, when there will be eclipses again. Will a time ever be when the lost secret of the foundation of Rome can be recovered by historic laws? If not, where is our science? It may be said that this is a particular fact, that we can deal satisfactorily with general phenomena affecting eras and cycles. Well, then, let us take some general phenomenon; Mahometanism, for instance, or Buddhism. Those are large enough. Can you imagine a science which would have[1] foretold such movements as those? The state of things out of which they rose is obscure; but, suppose it not obscure, can you conceive that, with any amount of historical insight into the old Oriental beliefs, you could have seen that they were about to transform themselves into those particular forms and no other?

It is not enough to say, that, after the fact, you can understand partially how Mahometanism came to be. All historians worth the name have told us something about that. But when we talk of science, we mean something with more ambitious pretences, we mean something which can foresee as well as explain; and, thus looked at, to state the problem is to show its absurdity. As little could the wisest man have foreseen this mighty revolution, as thirty years ago such a thing as Mormonism could have been anticipated in America; as little as it could have been foreseen that table-turning and spirit-rapping would have been an outcome of the scientific culture of England in the nineteenth century.

The greatest of Roman thinkers, gazing mournfully at the seething mass of moral putrefaction round him, detected and deigned to notice among its elements a certain detestable superstition, so he called it, rising up amidst the offscouring of the Jews, which was named Christianity. Could Tacitus have looked forward nine centuries to the Rome of Gregory VII, could he have beheld the representative of the majesty of the Cæsars holding the stirrup of the pontiff of that vile and execrated sect, the spectacle would scarcely have appeared to him the fulfilment of a national expectation, or an intelligible result of the causes in operation round him. Tacitus, indeed,

[1] It is objected that geology is a science: yet that geology cannot foretell the future changes of the earth's surface. Geology is not a century old, and its periods are measured by millions of years. Yet, if geology cannot foretell future facts, it enabled Sir Roderick Murchison to foretell the discovery of Australian gold.

was born before the science of history; but would M. Comte have seen any more clearly?

Nor is the case much better if we are less hard upon our philosophy; if we content ourselves with the past, and require only a scientific explanation of that.

First, for the facts themselves. They come to us through the minds of those who recorded them, neither machines nor angels, but fallible creatures, with human passions and prejudices. Tacitus and Thucydides were perhaps the ablest men who ever gave themselves to writing history; the ablest, and also the most incapable of conscious falsehood. Yet even now, after all these centuries, the truth of what they relate is called in question. Good reasons can be given to show that neither of them can be confidently trusted. If we doubt with these, whom are we to believe?

Or, again, let the facts be granted. To revert to my simile of the box of letters, you have but to select such facts as suit you, you have but to leave alone those which do not suit you, and, let your theory of history be what it will, you can find no difficulty in providing facts to prove it.

You may have your Hegel's philosophy of history, or you may have your Schlegel's philosophy of history; you may prove from history that the world is governed in detail by a special Providence; you may prove that there is no sign of any moral agent in the universe, except man; you may believe, if you like it, in the old theory of the wisdom of antiquity; you may speak, as was the fashion in the fifteenth century, of "our fathers, who had more wit and wisdom than we"; or you may talk of "our barbarian ancestors," and describe their wars as the scuffling of kites and crows.

You may maintain that the evolution of humanity has been an unbroken progress toward perfection; you may maintain that there has been no progress at all, and that man remains the same poor creature that he ever was; or, lastly, you may say, with the author of the "Contract Social," that men were purest and best in primeval simplicity—

"When wild in woods the noble savage ran."

In all or any of these views, history will stand your friend. History, in its passive irony, will make no objection. Like

Jarno, in Goethe's novel, it will not condescend to argue with you, and will provide you with abundant illustrations of anything which you may wish to believe.

"What is history," said Napoleon, "but a fiction agreed upon?" "My friend," said Faust to the student, who was growing enthusiastic about the spirit of past ages—"my friend, the times which are gone are a book with seven seals; and what you call the spirit of past ages is but the spirit of this or that worthy gentleman in whose mind those ages are reflected."

One lesson, and only one, history may be said to repeat with distinctness: that the world is built somehow on moral foundations; that, in the long run, it is well with the good; in the long run, it is ill with the wicked. But this is no science; it is no more than the old doctrine taught long ago by the Hebrew prophets. The theories of M. Comte and his disciples advance us, after all, not a step beyond the trodden and familiar ground. If men are not entirely animals, they are at least half animals, and are subject in this aspect of them to the conditions of animals. So far as those parts of man's doings are concerned, which neither have, nor need have, anything moral about them, so far the laws of him are calculable. There are laws for his digestion, and laws of the means by which his digestive organs are supplied with matter. But pass beyond them, and where are we? In a world where it would be as easy to calculate men's actions by laws like those of positive philosophy as to measure the orbit of Neptune with a foot-rule, or weigh Sirius in a grocer's scale.

And it is not difficult to see why this should be. The first principle, on which the theory of a science of history can be plausibly argued, is that all actions whatsoever arise from self-interest. It may be enlightened self-interest, it may be unenlightened; but it is assumed as an axiom, that every man, in whatever he does, is aiming at something which he considers will promote his happiness. His conduct is not determined by his will; it is determined by the object of his desire. Adam Smith, in laying the foundations of political economy, expressly eliminates every other motive. He does not say that men never act on other motives; still less, that they never ought to act on other motives. He asserts merely that, as far

as the arts of production are concerned, and of buying and selling, the action of self-interest may be counted upon as uniform. What Adam Smith says of political economy, Mr. Buckle would extend over the whole circle of human activity.

Now, that which especially distinguishes a high order of man from a low order of man—that which constitutes human goodness, human greatness, human nobleness—is surely not the degree of enlightenment with which men pursue their own advantage: but it is self-forgetfulness, it is self-sacrifice; it is the disregard of personal pleasure, personal indulgence, personal advantages remote or present, because some other line of conduct is more right.

We are sometimes told that this is but another way of expressing the same thing; that, when a man prefers doing what is right, it is only because to do right gives him a higher satisfaction. It appears to me, on the contrary, to be a difference in the very heart and nature of things. The martyr goes to the stake, the patriot to the scaffold, not with a view to any future reward to themselves, but because it is a glory to fling away their lives for truth and freedom. And so through all phases of existence, to the smallest details of common life, the beautiful character is the unselfish character. Those whom we most love and admire are those to whom the thought of self seems never to occur; who do simply and with no ulterior aim —with no thought whether it will be pleasant to themselves or unpleasant—that which is good and right and generous.

Is this still selfishness, only more enlightened? I do not think so. The essence of true nobility is neglect of self. Let the thought of self pass in, and the beauty of a great action is gone, like the bloom from a soiled flower. Surely it is a paradox to speak of the self-interest of a martyr who dies for a cause, the triumph of which he will never enjoy; and the greatest of that great company in all ages would have done what they did, had their personal prospects closed with the grave. Nay, there have been those so zealous for some glorious principle as to wish themselves blotted out of the book of Heaven if the cause of Heaven could succeed.

And out of this mysterious quality, whatever it be, arise the higher relations of human life, the higher modes of human obligation. Kant, the philosopher, used to say that

there were two things which overwhelmed him with awe as he thought of them. One was the star-sown deep of space, without limit and without end; the other was, right and wrong. Right, the sacrifice of self to good; wrong, the sacrifice of good to self—not graduated objects of desire, to which we are determined by the degrees of our knowledge, but wide asunder as pole and pole, as light and darkness: one the object of infinite love; the other, the object of infinite detestation and scorn. It is in this marvellous power in men to do wrong (it is an old story, but none the less true for that)—it is in this power to do wrong—wrong or right, as it lies somehow with ourselves to choose—that the impossibility stands of forming scientific calculations of what men will do before the fact, or scientific explanations of what they have done after the fact. If men were consistently selfish, you might analyze their motives; if they were consistently noble they would express in their conduct the laws of the highest perfection. But so long as two natures are mixed together, and the strange creature which results from the combination is now under one influence and now under another, so long you will make nothing of him except from the old-fashioned moral—or, if you please, imaginative—point of view.

Even the laws of political economy itself cease to guide us when they touch moral government. So long as labor is a chattel to be bought and sold, so long, like other commodities, it follows the condition of supply and demand. But if, for his misfortune, an employer considers that he stands in human relations toward his workmen; if he believes, rightly or wrongly, that he is responsible for them; that in return for their labor he is bound to see that their children are decently taught, and they and their families decently fed and clothed and lodged; that he ought to care for them in sickness and in old age—then political economy will no longer direct him, and the relations between himself and his dependents will have to be arranged on quite other principles.

So long as he considers only his own material profit, so long supply and demand will settle every difficulty; but the introduction of a new factor spoils the equation.

And it is precisely in this debatable ground of low motives and noble emotions; in the struggle, ever failing yet ever renewed, to carry truth and justice into the administration of

human society; in the establishment of states and in the overthrow of tyrannies; in the rise and fall of creeds; in the world of ideas; in the character and deeds of the great actors in the drama of life, where good and evil fight out their everlasting battle, now ranged in opposite camps, now and more often in the heart, both of them, of each living man—that the true human interest of history resides. The progress of industries, the growth of material and mechanical civilization, are interesting; but they are not the most interesting. They have their reward in the increase of material comforts; but, unless we are mistaken about our nature, they do not highly concern us after all.

Once more: not only is there in men this baffling duality of principle, but there is something else in us which still more defies scientific analysis.

Mr. Buckle would deliver himself from the eccentricities of this and that individual by a doctrine of averages. Though he cannot tell whether A, B, or C will cut his throat, he may assure himself that one man in every fifty thousand, or thereabout (I forget the exact proportion), will cut his throat, and with this he consoles himself. No doubt it is a comforting discovery. Unfortunately, the average of one generation need not be the average of the next. We may be converted by the Japanese, for all that we know, and the Japanese methods of taking leave of life may become fashionable among us. Nay, did not Novalis suggest that the whole race of men would at last become so disgusted with their impotence, that they would extinguish themselves by a simultaneous act of suicide, and make room for a better order of beings? Anyhow, the fountain out of which the race is flowing perpetually changes; no two generations are alike. Whether there is a change in the organization itself we cannot tell; but this is certain—that, as the planet varies with the atmosphere which surrounds it, so each new generation varies from the last, because it inhales as its atmosphere the accumulated experience and knowledge of the whole past of the world. These things form the spiritual air which we breathe as we grow; and, in the infinite multiplicity of elements of which that air is now composed, it is forever a matter of conjecture what the minds will be like which expand under its influence.

From the England of Fielding and Richardson to the England of Miss Austen, from the England of Miss Austen to the England of railways and free trade, how vast the change! Yet perhaps Sir Charles Grandison would not seem so strange to us now as one of ourselves will seem to our great-grandchildren. The world moves faster and faster; and the difference will probably be considerably greater.

The temper of each new generation is a continual surprise. The Fates delight to contradict our most confident expectations. Gibbon believed that the era of conquerors was at an end. Had he lived out the full life of man, he would have seen Europe at the feet of Napoleon. But a few years ago we believed the world had grown too civilized for war, and the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park was to be the inauguration of a new era. Battles bloody as Napoleon's are now the familiar tale of every day; and the arts which have made greatest progress are the arts of destruction. What next? We may strain our eyes into the future which lies beyond this waning century; but never was conjecture more at fault. It is blank darkness, which even the imagination fails to people.

What, then, is the use of history, and what are its lessons? If it can tell us little of the past, and nothing of the future, why waste our time over so barren a study?

First, it is a voice forever sounding across the centuries the laws of right and wrong. Opinions alter, manners change, creeds rise and fall, but the moral law is written on the tablets of eternity. For every false word or unrighteous deed, for cruelty and oppression, for lust or vanity, the price has to be paid at last; not always by the chief offenders, but paid by someone. Justice and truth alone endure and live. Injustice and falsehood may be long-lived, but doomsday comes at last to them, in French revolutions and other terrible ways.

That is one lesson of history. Another is, that we should draw no horoscopes; that we should expect little, for what we expect will not come to pass. Revolutions, reformations—those vast movements into which heroes and saints have flung themselves, in the belief that they were the dawn of the millennium—have not borne the fruit which they looked for. Millenniums are still far away. These great convulsions leave the world changed—perhaps improved, but not improved as

the actors in them hoped it would be. Luther would have gone to work with less heart could he have foreseen the Thirty Years' War, and in the distance the theology of Tübingen. Washington might have hesitated to draw the sword against England, could he have seen the country which he made as we see it now.[2]

The most reasonable anticipations fail us, antecedents the most apposite mislead us, because the conditions of human problems never repeat themselves. Some new feature alters everything—some element which we detect only in its after-operation.

But this, it may be said, is but a meagre outcome. Can the long records of humanity, with all its joys and sorrows, its sufferings and its conquests, teach us more than this? Let us approach the subject from another side.

If you were asked to point out the special features in which Shakespeare's plays are so transcendently excellent, you would mention perhaps, among others, this—that his stories are not put together, and his characters are not conceived, to illustrate any particular law or principle. They teach many lessons, but not any one prominent above another; and when we have drawn from them all the direct instruction which they contain, there remains still something unresolved—something which the artist gives, and which the philosopher cannot give.

It is in this characteristic that we are accustomed to say Shakespeare's supreme truth lies. He represents real life. His drama teaches as life teaches—neither less nor more. He builds his fabrics, as nature does, on right and wrong; but he does not struggle to make nature more systematic than she is. In the subtle interflow of good and evil; in the unmerited sufferings of innocence; in the disproportion of penalties to desert; in the seeming blindness with which justice, in attempting to assert itself, overwhelms innocent and guilty in a common ruin—Shakespeare is true to real experience. The mystery of life he leaves as he finds it; and, in his most tremendous positions, he is addressing rather the intellectual emotions than the understanding—knowing well that the understanding in such things is at fault, and the sage as ignorant as the child.

[2] February, 1864.

Only the highest order of genius can represent nature thus. An inferior artist produces either something entirely immoral, where good and evil are names, and nobility of disposition is supposed to show itself in the absolute disregard of them, or else, if he is a better kind of man, he will force on Nature a didactic purpose; he composes what are called moral tales, which may edify the conscience, but only mislead the intellect.

The finest work of this kind produced in modern times is Lessing's play of "Nathan the Wise." The object of it is to teach religious toleration. The doctrine is admirable, the mode in which it is enforced is interesting; but it has the fatal fault that it is not true. Nature does not teach religious toleration by any such direct method; and the result is—no one knew it better than Lessing himself—that the play is not poetry, but only splendid manufacture. Shakespeare is eternal; Lessing's "Nathan" will pass away with the mode of thought which gave it birth. One is based on fact; the other, on human theory about fact. The theory seems at first sight to contain the most immediate instruction; but it is not really so.

Cibber and others, as you know, wanted to alter Shakespeare. The French king, in "Lear," was to be got rid of; Cordelia was to marry Edgar, and Lear himself was to be rewarded for his sufferings by a golden old age. They could not bear that Hamlet should suffer for the sins of Claudius. The wicked king was to die, and the wicked mother; and Hamlet and Ophelia were to make a match of it, and live happily ever after. A common novelist would have arranged it thus; and you would have had your comfortable moral that wickedness was fitly punished, and virtue had its due reward, and all would have been well. But Shakespeare would not have it so. Shakespeare knew that crime was not so simple in its consequences, or Providence so paternal. He was contented to take the truth from life; and the effect upon the mind of the most correct theory of what life ought to be, compared to the effect of the life itself, is infinitesimal in comparison.

Again, let us compare the popular historical treatment of remarkable incidents with Shakespeare's treatment of them. Look at "Macbeth." You may derive abundant instruction from it—instruction of many kinds. There is a moral lesson

of profound interest in the steps by which a noble nature glides to perdition. In more modern fashion you may speculate, if you like, on the political conditions represented there, and the temptation presented in absolute monarchies to unscrupulous ambition; you may say, like Doctor Slop, these things could not have happened under a constitutional government: or, again, you may take up your parable against superstition; you may dilate on the frightful consequences of a belief in witches, and reflect on the superior advantages of an age of schools and newspapers. If the bare facts of the story had come down to us from a chonicler, and an ordinary writer of the nineteenth century had undertaken to relate them, his account, we may depend upon it, would have been put together upon one or other of these principles. Yet, by the side of that unfolding of the secrets of the prison-house of the soul, what lean and shrivelled anatomies the best of such descriptions would seem!

Shakespeare himself, I suppose, could not have given us a theory of what he meant; he gave us the thing itself, on which we might make whatever theories we pleased.

Or, again, look at Homer.

The "Iliad" is from two to three thousand years older than "Macbeth," and yet it is as fresh as if it had been written yesterday. We have there no lessons save in the emotions which rise in us as we read. Homer had no philosophy; he never struggles to press upon us his views about this or that; you can scarcely tell, indeed, whether his sympathies are Greek or Trojan: but he represents to us faithfully the men and women among whom he lived. He sang the tale of Troy, he touched his lyre, he drained the golden beaker in the halls of men like those on whom he was conferring immortality. And thus, although no Agamemnon, king of men, ever led a Grecian fleet to Ilium; though no Priam sought the midnight tent of Achilles; though Ulysses and Diomed and Nestor were but names, and Helen but a dream, yet, through Homer's power of representing men and women, those old Greeks will still stand out from amidst the darkness of the ancient world with a sharpness of outline which belongs to no period of history except the most recent. For the mere hard purposes of history, the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" are the most effective books which ever were written. We see the hall of Menelaus, we see

the garden of Alcinous, we see Nausicaa among her maidens on the shore, we see the mellow monarch sitting with ivory sceptre in the market-place dealing out genial justice. Or, again, when the wild mood is on, we can hear the crash of the spears, the rattle of the armor as the heroes fall, and the plunging of the horses among the slain. Could we enter the palace of an old Ionian lord, we know what we should see there; we know the words in which he would address us. We could meet Hector as a friend. If we could choose a companion to spend an evening with over a fireside, it would be the man of many counsels, the husband of Penelope.

I am not going into the vexed question whether history or poetry is the more true. It has been sometimes said that poetry is the more true, because it can make things more like what our moral sense would prefer they should be. We hear of poetic justice and the like, as if nature and fact were not just enough.

I entirely dissent from that view. So far as poetry attempts to improve on truth in that way, so far it abandons truth, and is false to itself. Even literal facts, exactly as they were, a great poet will prefer whenever he can get them. Shakespeare in the historical plays is studious, wherever possible, to give the very words which he finds to have been used; and it shows how wisely he was guided in this, that those magnificent speeches of Wolsey are taken exactly, with no more change than the metre makes necessary, from Cavendish's Life. Marlborough read Shakespeare for English history, and read nothing else. The poet only is not bound, when it is inconvenient, to what may be called the accidents of facts. It was enough for Shakespeare to know that Prince Hal in his youth had lived among loose companions, and the tavern in Eastcheap came in to fill out his picture; although Mrs. Quickly and Falstaff and Poins and Bardolph were more likely to have been fallen in with by Shakespeare himself at the Mermaid, than to have been comrades of the true Prince Henry. It was enough for Shakespeare to draw real men, and the situation, whatever it might be, would sit easy on them. In this sense only it is that poetry is truer than History—that it can make a picture more complete. It may take liberties with time and space, and give the action distinctness by throwing it into more

manageable compass. But it may not alter the real condition of things, or represent life as other than it is. The greatness of the poet depends on his being true to Nature, without insisting that nature shall theorize with him, without making her more just, more philosophical, more moral than reality; and, in difficult matters, leaving much to reflection which cannot be explained.

And if this be true of poetry—if Homer and Shakespeare are what they are from the absence of everything didactic about them—may we not thus learn something of what history should be, and in what sense it should aspire to teach?

If poetry must not theorize, much less should the historian theorize, whose obligations to be true to fact are even greater than the poet's. If the drama is grandest when the action is least explicable by laws, because then it best resembles life, then history will be grandest also under the same conditions. "Macbeth," were it literally true, would be perfect history; and so far as the historian can approach to that kind of model, so far as he can let his story tell itself in the deeds and words of those who act it out, so far is he most successful. His work is no longer the vapor of his own brain, which a breath will scatter; it is the thing itself, which will have interest for all time. A thousand theories may be formed about it—spiritual theories. Pantheistic theories, cause and effect theories? but each age will have its own philosophy of history, and all these in turn will fail and die. Hegel falls out of date, Schlegel falls out of date, and Comte in good time will fall out of date; the thought about the thing must change as we change; but the thing itself can never change; and a history is durable or perishable as it contains more or least of the writer's own speculations. The splendid intellect of Gibbon for the most part kept him true to the right course in this; yet the philosophical chapters for which he has been most admired or censured may hereafter be thought the least interesting in his work. The time has been when they would not have been comprehended; the time may come when they will seem commonplace.

It may be said, that in requiring history to be written like a drama, we require an impossibility.

For history to be written with the complete form of a drama,

doubtless is impossible; but there are periods, and these the periods, for the most part, of greatest interest to mankind, the history of which may be so written that the actors shall reveal their characters in their own words; where mind can be seen matched against mind, and the great passions of the epoch not simply be described as existing, but be exhibited at their white heat in the souls and hearts possessed by them. There are all the elements of drama—drama of the highest order—where the huge forces of the times are as the Grecian destiny, and the power of the man is seen either stemming the stream till it overwhelms him, or ruling while he seems to yield to it.

It is nature's drama—not Shakespeare's, but a drama none the less.

So at least it seems to me. Wherever possible, let us not be told about this man or that. Let us hear the man himself speak, let us see him act, and let us be left to form our own opinions about him. The historian, we are told, must not leave his readers to themselves. He must not only lay the facts before them: he must tell them what he himself thinks about those facts. In my opinion, this is precisely what he ought not to do. Bishop Butler says somewhere, that the best book which could be written would be a book consisting only of premises, from which the readers should draw conclusions for themselves. The highest poetry is the very thing which Butler requires, and the highest history ought to be. We should no more ask for a theory of this or that period of history than we should ask for a theory of " Macbeth " or " Hamlet." Philosophies of history, sciences of history—all these there will continue to be: the fashions of them will change, as our habits of thought will change; each new philosopher will find his chief employment in showing that before him no one understood anything; but the drama of history is imperishable, and the lessons of it will be like what we learn from Homer or Shakespeare—lessons for which we have no words.

The address of history is less to the understanding than to the higher emotions. We learn in it to sympathize with what is great and good; we learn to hate what is base. In the anomalies of fortune we feel the mystery of our mortal existence; and in the companionship of the illustrious natures who have shaped the fortunes of the world, we escape from the lit-

tlenesses which cling to the round of common life, and our minds are tuned in a higher and nobler key.

For the rest, and for those large questions which I touched in connection with Mr. Buckle, we live in times of disintegration, and none can tell what will be after us. What opinions, what convictions, the infant of to-day will find prevailing on the earth, if he and it live out together to the middle of another century, only a very bold man would undertake to conjecture. "The time will come," said Lichtenberg, in scorn at the materializing tendencies of modern thought—"the time will come when the belief in God will be as the tales with which old women frighten children; when the world will be a machine, the ether a gas, and God will be a force." Mankind, if they last long enough on the earth, may develop strange things out of themselves; and the growth of what is called the positive philosophy is a curious commentary on Lichtenberg's prophecy. But whether the end be seventy years hence, or seven hundred—be the close of the mortal history of humanity as far distant in the future as its shadowy beginnings seem now to lie behind us—this only we may foretell with confidence—that the riddle of man's nature will remain unsolved. There will be that in him yet which physical laws will fail to explain—that something, whatever it be, in himself and in the world, which science cannot fathom, and which suggests the unknown possibilities of his origin and his destiny. There will remain yet

> "Those obstinate questionings
> Of sense and outward things;
> Falling from us, vanishing;
> Blank misgivings of a creature
> Moving about in worlds not realized;
> High instincts, before which our mortal nature
> Doth tremble like a guilty thing surprised."

There will remain

> "Those first affections,
> Those shadowy recollections,
> Which, be they what they may,
> Are yet the fountain-light of all our day—
> Are yet the master-light of all our seeing—
> Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
> Our noisy years seem moments in the being
> Of the Eternal Silence."

PAINTING, A LANGUAGE

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THE SUBLIME IN ARCHITECTURE

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—

BY

JOHN RUSKIN

JOHN RUSKIN

John Ruskin, a writer of splendid prose, and one of the most gifted art critics of the time, is the son of a London merchant, and was born in 1819. His father, recognizing his artistic talent, fostered it by every means in his power. In 1839 he carried off the Newdigate prize for an English poem at Christ Church College, Oxford. In 1843 he published the first volume of "Modern Painters." This work was sufficient to establish his fame as an independent thinker and a masterly and eloquent writer on art. It was written to check the attacks on Turner's style of painting, and expanded itself into five large volumes. The "Seven Lamps of Architecture," which sprung out of memoranda collected for one of the sections of the third volume, was published in 1849. The "Stones of Venice," written at the cost of enormous labor, was published between the years 1851-53. Some criticisms on the paintings exhibited by the Royal Academy were afterwards published under the title of "Pre-Raphaelitism." In 1853 Mr. Ruskin lectured before the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution. In 1866 he published three lectures under the title of "The Crown of Wild Olive." His other appearances as a lecturer and essayist have been very numerous and varied. Some of these lectures and essays, published in a collected form, bear such titles as: "The Ethics of the Dust," "Sesame and Lilies," "Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds," an ecclesiastical pamphlet, and "Unto this Last," a reprint of four articles which appeared in the "Cornhill Magazine." Ruskin's other chief works are: "The Queen of the Air," being a study of Greek myths of cloud and storm, "Lectures on Art," "Munera Pulveris," "Proserpina," "Deucalion," "St. Mark's Rest," "Essays on Political Economy," "Aratra Pentelici," "Lectures on the Elements of Sculpture," "The Eagle's Nest," "Ten Lectures on the Relation of Natural Science to Art," etc. From 1871 to 1884 he published a periodical pamphlet called "Fors Clavigera," which expounds his particular views on art, literature, and the social life around him in England. The Slade professorship on art was again conferred on Mr. Ruskin in 1876. He had held this important professorship since its foundation in 1869. From 1885 to 1889 he published his autobiography under the title of "Præterita."

Ruskin's influence upon art and art-literature has been remarkable, and to his veneration for every work of creation, inculcated in all his writings, may be ascribed the origin of the society of young artists known as the Pre-Raphaelites. Protesting against what they conceived to be lax conventionalism in the style of most modern painters, the innovators went back, as they said, to nature, preferring her, in all her moods and phases, to ideal visions of what she occasionally might or ought to appear. Ruskin seems often to contradict himself; but on this point his own mind is easy. "For myself," he says, "I am never satisfied that I have handled a subject properly till I have contradicted myself at least three times." With this apology we may pass over apparent incongruities in the details of his system, and rest satisfied with the great principles which he so eloquently inculcates. These are singularly pure and lofty. The aim and object of his teaching, he says, is to declare that "whatever is great in human art is the expression of man's delight in God's work," and he insists upon a pure heart and earnest mind as essential to success. The four essays selected have been taken from "Modern Painters" and "Seven Lamps of Architecture," respectively.

PAINTING, A LANGUAGE

PAINTING, or art generally, as such, with all its technicalities, difficulties, and particular ends, is nothing but a noble and expressive language, invaluable as the vehicle of thought, but by itself nothing. He who has learned what is commonly considered the whole art of painting, that is, the art of representing any natural object faithfully, has as yet only learned the language by which his thoughts are to be expressed. He has done just as much towards being that which we ought to respect as a great painter, as a man who has learned how to express himself grammatically and melodiously has towards being a great poet. The language is, indeed, more difficult of acquirement in the one case than in the other, and possesses more power of delighting the sense, while it speaks to the intellect; but it is, nevertheless, nothing more than language, and all those excellences which are peculiar to the painter as such, are merely what rhythm, melody, precision, and force are in the words of the orator and the poet, necessary to their greatness, but not the tests of their greatness. It is not by the mode of representing and saying, but by what is represented and said, that the respective greatness either of the painter or the writer is to be finally determined.

Speaking with strict propriety, therefore, we should call a man a great painter only as he excelled in precision and force in the language of lines, and a great versifier, as he excelled in precision or force in the language of words. A great poet would then be a term strictly, and in precisely the same sense applicable to both, if warranted by the character of the images or thoughts which each in their respective languages conveyed.

Take, for instance, one of the most perfect poems or pictures (I use the words as synonymous) which modern times have seen—the "Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner." Here the ex-

quisite execution of the glossy and crisp hair of the dog, the bright, sharp touching of the green bough beside it, the clear painting of the wood of the coffin and the folds of the blanket, are language—language clear and expressive in the highest degree. But the close pressure of the dog's breast against the wood, the convulsive clinging of the paws, which has dragged the blanket off the trestle, the total powerlessness of the head laid, close and motionless, upon its folds, the fixed and tearful fall of the eye in its utter hopelessness, the rigidity of repose which marks that there has been no motion nor change in the trance of agony since the last blow was struck on the coffin-lid, the quietness and gloom of the chamber, the spectacles marking the place where the Bible was last closed, indicating how lonely has been the life—how unwatched the departure, of him who is now laid solitary in his sleep—these are all thoughts —thoughts by which the picture is separated at once from hundreds of equal merit, as far as mere painting goes, by which it ranks as a work of high art, and stamps its author, not as the neat imitator of the texture of a skin, or the fold of a drapery, but as the man of mind.

THE SUBLIME IN ARCHITECTURE

BESIDES this expression of living authority and power, there is, however, a sympathy in the forms of noble buildings with what is most sublime in natural things; and it is the governing power directed by this sympathy, whose operation I shall at present endeavor to trace, abandoning all inquiry into the more abstract fields of invention, for this latter faculty, and the questions of proportion and arrangement connected with its discussion, can only be rightly examined in a general view of all the arts; but its sympathy in architecture with the vast controlling powers of nature herself is special, and may shortly be considered, and that with the more advantage that it has, of late, been little felt or regarded by architects. I have seen, in recent efforts, much contest between two schools, one affecting originality and the other legality—many attempts at beauty of design—many ingenious adaptations of construction, but I have never seen any aim at the expression of abstract power, never any appearance of a consciousness that, in this primal art of man, there is room for the marking of his relations with the mightiest, as well as the fairest, works of God; and that those works themselves have been permitted by their Master and his to receive an added glory from their association with earnest efforts of human thought. In the edifices of man there should be found reverent worship and following, not only of the spirit which rounds the pillars of the forest and arches the vault of the avenue—which gives veining to the leaf, and polish to the shell, and grace to every pulse that agitates animal organization—but of that also which reproves the pillars of the earth, and builds up her barren precipices into the coldness of the clouds, and lifts her shadowy cones of mountain purple into the pale arch of the sky; for these, and other glories more than these, refuse not to connect themselves, in his thoughts,

with the work of his own hand; the gray cliff loses not its nobleness when it reminds us of some Cyclopean waste of mural stone; the pinnacles of the rocky promontory arrange themselves, undegraded, into fantastic semblances of fortress towers; and even the awful cone of the far-off mountain has a melancholy mixed with that of its own solitude, which is cast from the images of nameless tumuli on white sea-shores, and of the heaps of reedy clay, into which chambered cities melt in their mortality.

Let us, then, see what is this power and majesty which nature herself does not disdain to accept from the works of man, and what that sublimity in the masses built up by his coralline-like energy, which is honorable, even when transferred by association to the dateless hills, which it needed earthquakes to lift and deluges to mould.

And, first, of mere size: It might not be thought possible to emulate the sublimity of natural objects in this respect; nor would it be, if the architect contended with them in pitched battle. It would not be well to build pyramids in the valley of Chamouni; and St. Peter's, among its many other errors, counts for not the least injurious its position on the slope of an inconsiderable hill. But imagine it placed on the plain of Marengo,[1] or like the Superga of Turin, or like La Salute at Venice! The fact is, that the apprehension of the size of natural objects, as well as of architecture, depends more on fortunate excitement of the imagination than on measurements by the eye; and the architect has a peculiar advantage in being able to press close upon the sight such magnitude as he can command. There are few rocks, even among the Alps, that have a clear vertical fall as high as the choir of Beauvais; and if we secure a good precipice of wall, or a sheer and unbroken flank of tower, and place them where there are no enormous natural features to oppose them, we shall feel in them no want of sublimity of size. And it may be matter of encouragement in this respect, though one also of regret, to observe how much oftener man destroys natural sublimity than nature crushes human power. It does not need much to humiliate a mountain. A hut will sometimes do it; I never look up to the Col de Balme from Chamouni, without a violent feeling of provocation against its hospitable little cabin, whose bright

white walls form a visibly four-square spot on the green ridge, and entirely destroy all idea of its elevation. A single villa will often mar a whole landscape, and dethrone a dynasty of hills, and the Acropolis of Athens, Parthenon and all, has, I believe, been dwarfed into a model by the palace lately built beneath it. The fact is, that hills are not so high as we fancy them, and, when to the actual impression of no mean comparative size is added the sense of the toil of manly hand and thought, a sublimity is reached, which nothing but gross error in arrangement of its parts can destroy.

While, therefore, it is not to be supposed that mere size will ennoble a mean design, yet every increase of magnitude will bestow upon it a certain degree of nobleness: so that it is well to determine at first, whether the building is to be markedly beautiful, or markedly sublime; and if the latter, not to be withheld by respect to smaller parts from reaching largeness of scale; provided only, that it be evidently in the architect's power to reach at least that degree of magnitude which is the lowest at which sublimity begins, rudely definable as that which will make a living figure look less than life beside it. It is the misfortune of most of our modern buildings that we would fain have a universal excellence in them; and so part of the funds must go in painting, part in gilding, part in fitting up, part in painted windows, part in small steeples, part in ornaments here and there; and neither the windows, nor the steeples, nor the ornaments, are worth their materials. For there is a crust about the impressible part of men's minds, which must be pierced through before they can be touched to the quick; and though we may prick at it and scratch it in a thousand separate places, we might as well have let it alone if we do not come through somewhere with a deep thrust: and if we can give such a thrust anywhere, there is no need of another; it need not be even so "wide as a church door," so that it be enough. And mere weight will do this; it is a clumsy way of doing it, but an effectual one too; and the apathy which cannot be pierced through by a small steeple, nor shone through by a small window, can be broken through in a moment by the mere weight of a great wall. Let, therefore, the architect who has not large resources choose his point of attack first, and, if he choose size, let him

abandon decoration; for, unless they are concentrated, and numerous enough to make their concentration conspicuous, all his ornaments together will not be worth one huge stone. And the choice must be a decided one, without compromise. It must be no question whether his capitals would not look better with a little carving—let him leave them huge as blocks; or whether his arches should not have richer architraves—let him throw them a foot higher, if he can; a yard more across the nave will be worth more to him than tessellated pavement; and another fathom of outer wall, than an army of pinnacles. The limitation of size must be only in the uses of the building, or in the ground at his disposal.

That limitation, however, being by such circumstances determined, by what means, it is to be next asked, may the actual magnitude be best displayed; since it is seldom, perhaps never, that a building of any pretension to size looks so large as it is? The appearance of a figure in any distant, more especially in any upper, parts of it, will almost always prove that we have underestimated the magnitude of those parts.

MAN'S USE AND FUNCTION

MAN'S use and function (and let him who will not grant me this follow me no further, for this I propose always to assume) are, to be the witness of the glory of God, and to advance that glory by his reasonable obedience and resultant happiness.

Whatever enables us to fulfil this function is, in the pure and first sense of the word, useful to us; preëminently, therefore, whatever sets the glory of God more brightly before us. But things that only help us to exist are, in a secondary and mean sense, useful; or rather, if they be looked for alone, they are useless, and worse, for it would be better that we should not exist, than that we should guiltily disappoint the purposes of existence.

And yet people speak in this working age, when they speak from their hearts, as if houses and lands, and food and raiment, were alone useful, and as if sight, thought, and admiration were all profitless, so that men insolently call themselves utilitarians, who would turn, if they had their way, themselves and their race into vegetables; men who think, as far as such can be said to think, that the meat is more than the life, and the raiment than the body, who look to the earth as a stable, and to its fruit as fodder; vine-dressers and husbandmen, who love the corn they grind, and the grapes they crush, better than the gardens of the angels upon the slopes of Eden; hewers of wood and drawers of water, who think that it is to give them wood to hew, and water to draw, that the pine-forests cover the mountains like the shadow of God, and the great rivers move like His eternity. And so come upon us that woe of the preacher, that though God "hath made everything beautiful in his time, also He hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."

This Nebuchadnezzar curse, that sends men to grass like oxen,

seems to follow but too closely on the excess or continuance of national power and peace. In the perplexities of nations, in their struggles for existence, in their infancy, their impotence, or even their disorganization, they have higher hopes and nobler passions. Out of the suffering comes the serious mind; out of the salvation, the grateful heart; out of endurance, fortitude; out of deliverance, faith: but when they have learned to live under providence of laws, and with decency and justice of regard for each other, and when they have done away with violent and external sources of suffering, worse evils seem to arise out of their rest; evils that vex less and mortify more, that suck the blood though they do not shed it, and ossify the heart though they do not torture it. And deep though the causes of thankfulness must be to every people at peace with others and at unity in itself, there are causes of fear, also, a fear greater than of sword and sedition: that dependence on God may be forgotten, because the bread is given and the water sure; that gratitude to Him may cease, because His constancy of protection has taken the semblance of a natural law; that heavenly hope may grow faint amidst the full fruition of the world; that selfishness may take the place of undemanded devotion, compassion be lost in vain-glory, and love in dissimulation; that enervation may succeed to strength, apathy to patience, and the noise of jesting words and foulness of dark thoughts, to the earnest purity of the girded loins and the burning lamp. About the river of human life there is a wintry wind, though a heavenly sunshine; the iris colors its agitation, the frost fixes upon its repose. Let us beware that our rest become not the rest of stones, which so long as they are torrent tossed and thunder stricken maintain their majesty, but when the stream is silent, and the storm passed, suffer the grass to cover them and the lichen to feed on them, and are ploughed down into dust.

And though I believe that we have salt enough of ardent and holy mind amongst us to keep us in some measure from this moral decay, yet the signs of it must be watched with anxiety, in all matter however trivial, in all directions however distant. And at this time, when the iron roads are tearing up the surface of Europe, as grapeshot do the sea, when their great net is drawing and twitching the ancient frame and strength together, contracting all its various life, its rocky arms and rural heart,

into a narrow, finite, calculating metropolis of manufactures; when there is not a monument throughout the cities of Europe that speaks of old years and mighty people, but it is being swept away to build cafés and gaming-houses; when the honor of God is thought to consist in the poverty of His temple, and the column is shortened and the pinnacle shattered, the color denied to the casement and the marble to the altar, while exchequers are exhausted in luxury of boudoirs and pride of reception-rooms; when we ravage without a pause all the loveliness of creation which God in giving pronounced good, and destroy without a thought all those labors which men have given their lives and their sons' sons' lives to complete, and have left for a legacy to all their kind, a legacy of more than their hearts' blood, for it is of their souls' travail; there is need, bitter need, to bring back into men's minds, that to live is nothing, unless to live be to know Him by whom we live; and that He is not to be known by marring His fair works, and blotting out the evidence of His influences upon His creatures; not amidst the hurry of crowds and crash of innovation, but in solitary places, and out of the glowing intelligences which He gave to men of old. He did not teach them how to build for glory and for beauty, He did not give them the fearless, faithful, inherited energies that worked on and down from death to death, generation after generation, that we might give the work of their poured-out spirit to the axe and the hammer; He has not cloven the earth with rivers, that their white wild waves might turn wheels and push paddles, nor turned it up under, as it were fire, that it might heat wells and cure diseases; He brings not up His quails by the east wind, only to let them fall in flesh about the camp of men; He has not heaped the rocks of the mountain only for the quarry, nor clothed the grass of the field only for the oxen.

LOVE OF NATURE

THOUGH the absence of the love of nature is not an assured condemnation, its presence is an invariable sign of goodness of heart and justness of moral perception, though by no means of moral practice; that in proportion to the degree in which it is felt will probably be the degree in which all nobleness and beauty of character will also be felt; that when it is originally absent from any mind, that mind is in many other respects hard, worldly, and degraded; that where, having been originally present, it is repressed by art or education, that repression appears to have been detrimental to the person suffering it; and that wherever the feeling exists, it acts for good on the character to which it belongs, though, as it may often belong to characters weak in other respects, it may carelessly be mistaken for a source of evil in them.

And having arrived at this conclusion by a review of facts, which I hope it will be admitted, whether accurate or not, has at least been candid, these further considerations may confirm our belief in its truth. Observe: the whole force of education, until very lately, has been directed in every possible way to the destruction of the love of nature. The only knowledge which has been considered essential among us is that of words, and, next after it, of the abstract sciences; while every liking shown by children for simple natural history has been either violently checked (if it took an inconvenient form for the housemaids), or else scrupulously limited to hours of play; so that it has really been impossible for any child earnestly to study the works of God but against its conscience; and the love of nature has become inherently the characteristic of truants and idlers. While also the art of drawing, which is of more real importance to the human race than that of writing (because people can hardly draw anything without being of some use both to themselves and others, and can hardly write anything without wasting their own time and that of others)—this art

of drawing, I say, which on plain and stern system should be taught to every child, just as writing is, has been so neglected and abused that there is not one man in a thousand, even of its professed teachers, who knows its first principles; and thus it needs much ill-fortune or obstinacy—much neglect on the part of his teachers, or rebellion on his own, before a boy can get leave to use his eyes or his fingers, so that those who can use them are for the most part neglected or rebellious lads—runaways and bad scholars—passionate, erratic, self-willed, and restive against all forms of education; while your well-behaved and amiable scholars are disciplined into blindness and palsy of half their faculties. Wherein there is at once a notable ground for what difference we have observed between the lovers of nature and its despisers; between the somewhat immoral and unrespectable watchfulness of the one and the moral and respectable blindness of the other.

One more argument remains, and that, I believe, an unanswerable one. As, by the accident of education, the love of nature has been among us associated with wilfulness, so, by the accident of time, it has been associated with faithlessness. I traced above the peculiar mode in which this faithlessness was indicated, but I never intended to imply, therefore, that it was an invariable concomitant of the love. Because it happens that, by various concurrent operations of evil, we have been led, according to those words of the Greek poet to "dethrone the gods and crown the whirlwind," it is no reason that we should forget there was once a time when "the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind." And if we now take final and full view of the matter, we shall find that the love of nature, wherever it has existed, has been a faithful and sacred element of human feeling—that is to say, supposing all circumstances otherwise the same with respect to two individuals, the one who loves nature most will be always found to have more faith in God than the other. It is intensely difficult, owing to the confusing and counter influences which always mingle in the data of the problem, to make this abstraction fairly; but so far as we can do it, so far, I boldly assert, the result is constantly the same; the nature-worship will be found to bring with it such a sense of the presence and power of a Great Spirit as no mere reasoning can either induce or controvert.

MY WINTER GARDEN

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BY

CHARLES KINGSLEY

CHARLES KINGSLEY

1819—1875

As a novelist, poet, theologian, and philanthropist, Charles Kingsley, rector of Eversley, Hampshire, and canon of Westminster, was one of the most remarkable and meritorious men of his age. His views of social reform verge upon Chartism, and in some instances are crude and impracticable in the present state of society; but his zeal, disinterestedness, and unceasing perseverance in seeking to remedy evils which press upon the working classes no one doubts or questions, while the genius he brought to bear on his various duties and tasks reflects honor on English literature. Kingsley was a native of Devonshire, born at Holne Vicarage, near Dartmoor, in 1819. He studied at King's College, London, and Magdalene College, Cambridge, and intended to follow the profession of the law. He soon, however, abandoned this intention, and entered the Church, obtaining first the curacy and then the rectory of Eversley, which he invested with affectionate interest and celebrity. Kingsley's first appearance as an author was in 1844, when he published a collection of "Village Sermons"—plain, earnest, useful discourses. He published several other volumes of sermons and lectures; but it is from his imaginative works that Kingsley derives his chief fame. In 1848 he appeared as a dramatic poet, author of "The Saint's Tragedy, or the Story of Elizabeth of Hungary, Landgravine of Thuringia." His next work was one of fiction—"Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet: an Autobiography," two volumes, 1849. The design of this tale is to show the evils of competition and the grievances of the artisan class. The same social topics are discussed in Kingsley's "Yeast, a Problem," 1851, which is devoted more particularly to the condition of the agricultural laborers. "Phaeton, or Loose Thoughts for Loose Thinkers," 1852, and "Hypatia, or New Friends with an Old Face," 1853, were Kingsley's next works. These were followed by a series of lectures, delivered at the Philosophical Institution, Edinburgh, on "Alexandria and Her Schools," 1854; and, in the following year, he took a higher position as a man of letters by his novel, "Westward Ho!" and his delightful little treatise of "Glaucus, or the Wonders of the Shore." Passing over some sermons and occasional tracts, we come to Kingsley's next novel, "Two Years Ago," published in 1857. In 1858 he published "Andromeda, and Other Poems."

The other works of Canon Kingsley are "Miscellanies" from "Fraser's Magazine," 1859; "The Water Babies," 1863; "Hereward, the Last of the English," 1866; "The Hermits," 1867; "How and Why," 1869; "At Last, a Christmas in the West Indies," 1871; "Health and Education," 1874. He was made canon of Chester in 1869, which he resigned in 1873, when made canon of Westminster. He died at his parsonage of Eversley, Hampshire, January 23, 1875, and he was interred in Westminster Abbey.

Kingsley's style is extremely vigorous, and has the additional advantage of being pointed without any apparent strain or effort. He is particularly happy in his vocabulary, and his prose writings abound in passages of rare beauty. "My Winter Garden," the essay given here, is written in Kingsley's characteristic style.

MY WINTER GARDEN

SO, my friend: you ask me to tell you how I contrive to support this monotonous country life; how, fond as I am of excitement, adventure, society, scenery, art, literature, I go cheerfully through the daily routine of a commonplace country profession, never requiring a six-weeks' holiday; not caring to see the Continent, hardly even to spend a day in London; having never yet actually got to Paris.

You wonder why I do not grow dull as those round me, whose talk is of bullocks—as indeed mine is, often enough; why I am not by this time "all over blue mould"; why I have not been tempted to bury myself in my study, and live a life of dreams among old books.

I will tell you. I am a minute philosopher: though one, thank Heaven, of a different stamp from him whom the great Bishop Berkeley silenced—alas! only for a while. I am possibly, after all, a man of small mind, content with small pleasures. So much the better for me. Meanwhile, I can understand your surprise, though you cannot understand my content. You have played a greater game than mine; have lived a life perhaps more fit for an Englishman, certainly more in accordance with the taste of our common fathers, the Vikings, and their patron Odin "the goer," father of all them that go ahead. You have gone ahead, and over many lands; and I reverence you for it, though I envy you not. You have commanded a regiment—indeed an army, and "drank delight of battle with your peers"; you have ruled provinces, and done justice and judgment, like a noble Englishman as you are, old friend, among thousands who never knew before what justice and judgment were. You have tasted (and you have deserved to taste) the joy of old David's psalm, when he has hunted down the last of the robber lords of Palestine. You have seen "a people whom you have not known serve you. As

soon as they heard of you, they obeyed you; but the strange children dissembled with you"; yet before you, too, "the strange children failed, and trembled in their hill-forts."

Noble work that was to do, and nobly you have done it; and I do not wonder that to a man who has been set to such a task, and given power to carry it through, all smaller work must seem paltry; that such a man's very amusements, in that grand Indian land, and that free, adventurous Indian life, exciting the imagination, calling out all the self-help and daring of a man, should have been on a par with your work; that when you go a-sporting, you ask for no meaner preserve than the primeval forest, no lower park wall than the snow-peaks of the Himalaya.

Yes; you have been a "burra Shikarree" as well as a "burra Sahib." You have played the great game in your work, and killed the great game in your play. How many tons of mighty monsters have you done to death, since we two were schoolboys together, five-and-twenty years ago? How many starving villages have you fed with the flesh of elephant or buffalo? How many have you delivered from man-eating tigers, or wary old alligators, their craws full of poor girls' bangles? Have you not been charged by rhinoceroses, all but ripped up by boars? Have you not seen face to face Ovis Ammon himself, the giant mountain sheep—primeval ancestor, perhaps, of all the flocks on earth? Your memories must be like those of Theseus and Hercules, full of slain monsters. Your brains must be one fossiliferous deposit, in which gaur and sambur, hog and tiger, rhinoceros and elephant, lie heaped together, as the old ichthyosaurs and plesiosaurs are heaped in the lias rocks at Lyme. And therefore I like to think of you. I try to picture your feelings to myself. I spell over with my boy Mayne Reid's amusing books, or the "Old Forest Ranger," or Williams's old "Tiger Book," with Howitt's plates; and try to realize the glory of a burra Shikarree: and as I read and imagine, feel, with Sir Hugh Evans, "a great dispositions to cry."

For there were times, full many a year ago, when my brains were full of bison and grizzly bear, mustang, and big-horn, Blackfoot and Pawnee, and hopes of wild adventure in the Far West, which I shall never see; for ere I was three-and-

twenty, I discovered, plainly enough, that my lot was to stay at home and earn my bread in a very quiet way; that England was to be henceforth my prison or my palace as I should choose to make it; and I have made it, by Heaven's help, the latter.

I will confess to you, though, that in those first heats of youth, this little England—or rather this little patch of moor in which I have struck roots as firm as the wild fir-trees do—looked at moments rather like a prison than a palace; that my foolish young heart would sigh, "Oh! that I had wings"—not as a dove, to fly home to its nest and croodle there—but as an eagle, to swoop away over land and sea, in a rampant and self-glorifying fashion, on which I now look back as altogether unwholesome and undesirable. But the thirst for adventure and excitement was strong in me, as perhaps it ought to be in all at twenty-one. Others went out to see the glorious new worlds of the West, the glorious old worlds of the East—why should not I? Others rambled over Alps and Apennines, Italian picture-galleries and palaces, filling their minds with fair memories—why should not I? Others discovered new wonders in botany and zoölogy—why should not I? Others too, like you, fulfilled to the utmost that strange lust after the burra shikar, which even now makes my pulse throb as often as I see the stags' heads in our friend A——'s hall—why should not I? It is not learned in a day, the golden lesson of the old Collect, to "love the thing which is commanded, and desire that which is promised." Not in a day, but in fifteen years one can spell out a little of its worth; and when one finds one's self on the wrong side of forty, and the first gray hairs begin to show on the temples, and one can no longer jump as high as one's third button—scarcely, alas! to any button at all; and what with innumerable sprains, bruises, soakings, and chillings, one's lower limbs feel in a cold thaw, much like an old post-horse's, why, one makes a virtue of necessity: and if one still lusts after sights, takes the nearest, and looks for wonders, not in the Himalayas or Lake Ngami, but in the turf on the lawn and the brook in the park; and with good Alphonse Karr enjoys the macro-microcosm in one "*Tour autour de mon jardin.*"

For there it is, friend, the whole infinite miracle of nature

in every tuft of grass, if we have only eyes to see it, and can disabuse our minds of that tyrannous phantom of size. Only recollect that great and small are but relative terms; that, in truth, nothing is great or small, save in proportion to the quantity of creative thought which has been exercised in making it; that the fly who basks upon one of the trilithons of Stonehenge, is in truth infinitely greater than all Stonehenge together, though he may measure the tenth of an inch, and the stone on which he sits five-and-twenty feet. You differ from me? Be it so. Even if you prove me wrong I will believe myself in the right: I cannot afford to do otherwise. If you rob me of my faith in "minute philosophy," you rob me of a continual source of content, surprise, delight.

So go your way and I mine, each working with all his might, and playing with all his might, in his own place and way. Remember only, that though I never can come round to your sphere, you must some day come round to me, when wounds, or weariness, or merely, as I hope, a healthy old age, shall shut you out for once and for all from burra shikar, whether human or quadruped.—For you surely will not take to politics in your old age? You will not surely live to solicit (as many a fine fellow, alas! did but last year) the votes, not even of the people, but merely of the snobocracy, on the ground of your having neither policy nor principles, nor even opinions, upon any matter in heaven or earth? Then in that day will you be forced, my friend, to do what I have done this many a year: to refrain your soul, and keep it low. You will see more and more the depth of human ignorance, the vanity or human endeavors. You will feel more and more that the world is going God's way, and not yours, or mine, or any man's; and that if you have been allowed to do good work on earth, that work is probably as different from what you fancy it as the tree is from the seed whence it springs. You will grow content, therefore, not to see the real fruit of your labors; because if you saw it you would probably be frightened at it, and what is very good in the eyes of God would not be very good in yours; content, also, to receive your discharge, and work and fight no more, sure that God is working and fighting, whether you are in hospital or in the field. And with this growing sense of the pettiness of human struggles will grow

on you a respect for simple labors, a thankfulness for simple pleasures, a sympathy with simple people, and possibly, my trusty friend, with me and my little tours about that moorland which I call my winter-garden, and which is to me as full of glory and of instruction as the Himalaya or the Punjab are to you, and in which I contrive to find as much health and amusement as I have time for—and who ought to have more?

I call the said garden mine, not because I own it in any legal sense (for only in a few acres have I a life interest), but in that higher sense in which ten thousand people can own the same thing, and yet no man's right interfere with another's. To whom does the Apollo Belvedere belong, but to all who have eyes to see its beauty? So does my winter garden; and therefore to me among the rest.

Besides (which is a gain to a poor man), my pleasure in it is a very cheap one. So are all those of a minute philosopher, except his microscope. But my winter garden, which is far larger, at all events, than that famous one at Chatsworth, costs me not one penny in keeping up. Poor, did I call myself? Is it not true wealth to have all I want without paying for it? Is it not true wealth, royal wealth, to have some twenty gentlemen and noblemen, nay, even royal personages, planting and improving for me? Is it not more than royal wealth to have sun and frost, Gulf Stream and southwesters, laws of geology, phytology, physiology, and other ologies—in a word, the whole universe and the powers thereof, day and night, paving, planting, roofing, lighting, coloring my winter garden for me, without my even having the trouble to rub a magic ring and tell the genii to go to work?

Yes. I am very rich, as every man may be who will. In the doings of our little country neighborhood I find tragedy and comedy, too fantastic, sometimes too sad, to be written down. In the words of those whose talk is of bullocks I find the materials of all possible metaphysic, and long weekly that I had time to work them out. In fifteen miles of moorland I find the materials of all possible physical science, and long that I had time to work out one smallest segment of that great sphere. How can I be richer, if I have lying at my feet all day a thousand times more wealth than I can use?

Some people—most people—in these runabout railway days,

would complain of such a life, in such a "narrow sphere," so they call it, as monotonous. Very likely it is so. But is it to be complained of on that account? Is monotony in itself an evil? Which is better, to know many places ill or to know one place well? Certainly—if a scientific habit of mind be a gain—it is only by exhausting as far as possible the significance of an individual phenomenon (is not that sentence a true scientific one in its magniloquence?) that you can discover any glimpse of the significance of the universal. Even men of boundless knowledge, like Humboldt, must have had once their specialty, their pet subject, or they would have, strictly speaking, no knowledge at all. The volcanoes of Mexico, patiently and laboriously investigated in his youth, were to Humboldt, possibly, the key of the whole Cosmos. I learn more studying over and over again the same Bagshot sand and gravel heaps, than I should by roaming all Europe in search of new geologic wonders. Fifteen years have I been puzzling at the same questions and have only guessed at a few of the answers. What sawed out the edges of the moors into long narrow banks of gravel? What cut them off all flat atop? What makes *Erica tetralix* grow in one soil and the bracken in another? How did three species of club-moss—one of them quite an Alpine one—get down here, all the way from Wales perhaps, upon this isolated patch of gravel? Why did that one patch of *Carex arenaria* settle in the only square yard for miles and miles which bore sufficient resemblance to its native sand-hill by the seashore, to make it comfortable? Why did *Myosurus minimus*, which I had hunted for in vain for fourteen years, appear by dozens in the fifteenth, upon a new-made bank, which had been for at least two hundred years a farmyard gateway? Why does it generally rain here from the southwest, not when the barometer falls, but when it begins to rise again? Why—why is everything which lies under my feet all day long? I don't know; and you can't tell me. And till I have found out, I cannot complain of monotony, with still undiscovered puzzles waiting to be explained, and so to create novelty at every turn.

Besides, monotony is pleasant in itself; morally pleasant, and morally useful. Marriage is monotonous; but there is much, I trust, to be said in favor of holy wedlock. Living in

the same house is monotonous; but three removes, say the wise, are as bad as a fire. Locomotion is regarded as an evil by our Litany. The Litany, as usual, is right. "Those who travel by land or sea" are to be objects of our pity and our prayers; and I do pity them. I delight in that same monotony. It saves curiosity, anxiety, excitement, disappointment, and a host of bad passions. It gives the man the blessed, invigorating feeling that he is at home; that he has roots, deep and wide, struck down into all he sees; and that only The Being who will do nothing cruel or useless can tear them up. It is pleasant to look down on the same parish day after day, and say, I know all that lies beneath, and all beneath know me. If I want a friend, I know where to find him; if I want work done, I know who will do it. It is pleasant and good to see the same trees year after year; the same birds coming back in spring to the same shrubs; the same banks covered with the same flowers, and broken (if they be stiff ones) by the same gaps. Pleasant and good it is to ride the same horse, to sit in the same chair, to wear the same old coat. That man who offered twenty pounds' reward for a lost carpet-bag full of old boots was a sage, and I wish I knew him. Why should one change one's place any more than one's wife or one's children? Is a hermit-crab, slipping his tail out of one strange shell into another, in the hopes of its fitting him a little better, either a dignified, safe, or graceful animal? No; George Riddler was a true philosopher:

> "Let vules go sarching vur and nigh,
> We bides at Whum, my dog and I;"

and become there, not only wiser, but more charitable; for the oftener one sees, the better one knows; and the better one knows, the more one loves.

It is an easy philosophy; especially in the case of the horse, where a man cannot afford more than one, as I cannot. To own a stud of horses, after all, is not to own horses at all, but riding-machines. Your rich man who rides Crimæa in the morning, Sir Guy in the afternoon, and Sultan to-morrow, and something else the next day, may be a very gallant rider; but it is a question whether he enjoys the pleasure which one horse gives to the poor man who rides him day after day; one

horse, who is not a slave, but a friend; who has learned all his tricks of voice, hand, heel, and knows what his master wants, even without being told; who will bear with his master's infirmities, and feels secure that his master will bear with his in turn.

Possibly, after all, the grapes are sour; and were one rich, one would do even as the rich are wont to do: but still, I am a minute philosopher. And therefore, this afternoon, after I have done the same work, visited the same people, and said the same words to them, which I have done for years past, and shall, I trust, for many a year to come, I shall go wandering out into the same winter garden on the same old mare; and think the same thoughts, and see the same fir-trees, and meet perhaps the same good fellows hunting of their fox, as I have done with full content this many a year; and rejoice, as I said before, in my own boundless wealth, who have the whole universe to look at, without being charged one penny for the show.

As I have said, the graps may be sour, and I enjoy the want of luxuries only because I cannot get them; but if my self-deception be useful to me, leave it alone.

No one is less inclined to depreciate that magnificent winter garden at the Crystal Palace: yet let me, if I choose, prefer my own; I argue that, in the first place, it is far larger. You may drive, I hear, through the grand one at Chatsworth for a quarter of a mile. You may ride through mine for fifteen miles on end. I prefer, too, to any glass roof which Sir Joseph Paxton ever planned, that dome above my head some three miles high, of soft dappled gray and yellow cloud, through the vast lattice-work whereof the blue sky peeps, and sheds down tender gleams on yellow bogs, and softly rounded heather knolls, and pale chalk ranges gleaming far away. But, above all, I glory in my evergreens. What winter garden can compare for them with mine? True, I have but four kinds—Scotch fir, holly, furze, and the heath; and by way of relief to them, only brows of brown fern, sheets of yellow bog-grass, and here and there a leafless birch, whose purple tresses are even more lovely to my eye than those fragrant green ones which she puts on in spring. Well: in painting as in music, what effects are more grand than those produced by the scien-

tific combination, in endless new variety, of a few simple elements? Enough for me is the one purple birch; the bright hollies round its stem sparkling with scarlet beads; the furze-patch, rich with its lace-work of interwoven light and shade, tipped here and there with a golden bud; the deep soft heather carpet, which invites you to lie down and dream for hours; and behind all, the wall of red fir-stems, and the dark fir-roof with its jagged edges a mile long, against the soft gray sky.

An ugly, straight-edged, monotonous fir-plantation? Well, I like it, outside and inside. I need no saw-edge of mountain peaks to stir up my imagination with the sense of the sublime, while I can watch the saw-edge of those fir peaks against the red sunset. They are my Alps; little ones it may be: but after all, as I asked before, what is size? A phantom of our brain; an optical delusion. Grandeur, if you will consider wisely, consists in form, and not in size: and to the eye of the philosopher, the curve drawn on a paper two inches long is just as magnificent, just as symbolic of divine mysteries and melodies, as when embodied in the span of some cathedral roof. Have you eyes to see? Then lie down on the grass, and look near enough to see something more of what is to be seen; and you will find tropic jungles in every square foot of turf; mountain cliffs and debacles at the mouth of every rabbit burrow: dark strids, tremendous cataracts, "deep glooms and sudden glories," in every foot-broad rill which wanders through the turf. All is there for you to see, if you will but rid yourself of "that idol of space"; and Nature, as everyone will tell you who has seen dissected an insect under the microscope, is as grand and graceful in her smallest as in her hugest forms.

The March breeze is chilly: but I can be always warm if I like in my winter garden. I turn my horse's head to the red wall of fir-stems, and leap over the furze-grown bank into my cathedral, wherein if there be no saints, there are likewise no priestcraft and no idols; but endless vistas of smooth, red, green-veined shafts holding up the warm dark roof, lessening away into endless gloom, paved with rich brown fir-needle—a carpet at which Nature has been at work for forty years. Red shafts, green roof, and here and there a pane of blue sky—neither Owen Jones nor Willement can improve upon that ecclesiastical ornamentation—while for incense I have the fresh

healthy turpentine fragrance, far sweeter to my nostrils than the stifling narcotic odor which fills a Roman Catholic cathedral. There is not a breath of air within: but the breeze sighs over the roof above in a soft whisper. I shut my eyes and listen. Surely that is the murmur of the summer sea upon the summer sands in Devon far away. I hear the innumerable wavelets spend themselves gently upon the shore, and die away to rise again. And with the innumerable wave-sighs come innumerable memories, and faces which I shall never see again upon this earth. I will not tell even you of that, old friend.

It has two notes, two keys rather, that Æolian harp of fir-needles above my head; according as the wind is east or west, the needles dry or wet. This easterly key of to-day is shriller, more cheerful, warmer in sound, though the day itself be colder: but grander still, as well as softer, is the sad soughing key in which the southwest wind roars on, rain-laden, over the forest, and calls me forth—being a minute philosopher—to catch trout in the nearest chalk-stream.

The breeze is gone awhile; and I am in perfect silence—a silence which may be heard. Not a sound; and not a moving object; absolutely none. The absence of animal life is solemn, startling. That ring dove, who was cooing half a mile away, has hushed his moan; that flock of long-tailed titmice, which were twinging and pecking about the fir-cones a few minutes since, are gone: and now there is not even a gnat to quiver in the slant sun-rays. Did a spider run over these dead leaves, I almost fancy I could hear his footfall. The creaking of the saddle, the soft step of the mare upon the fir-needles, jar my ears. I seem alone in a dead world. A dead world: and yet so full of life, if I had eyes to see! Above my head every fir-needle is breathing—breathing forever; currents unnumbered circulate in every bough, quickened by some undiscovered miracle; around me every fir-stem is distilling strange juices, which no laboratory of man can make; and where my dull eye sees only death, the eye of God sees boundless life and motion, health and use.

Slowly I wander on beneath the warm roof of the winter garden, and meditate upon that one word—Life; and specially on all that Mr. Lewes has written so well thereon—for instance—

"We may consider Life itself as an ever-increasing identification with Nature. The simple cell, from which the plant or animal arises, must draw light and heat from the sun, nutriment from the surrounding world, or else it will remain quiescent, not alive, though latent with life; as the grains in the Egyptian tombs, which after lying thousands of years in those sepulchres, are placed in the earth, and smile forth as golden wheat. What we call growth, is it not a perpetual absorption of Nature, the identification of the individual with the universal? And may we not, in speculative moods, consider Death as the grand impatience of the soul to free itself from the circle of individual activity—the yearning of the creature to be united with the Creator?

"As with Life, so with knowledge, which is intellectual life. In the early days of man's history, Nature and her marvellous ongoings were regarded with but a casual and careless eye, or else with the merest wonder. It was late before profound and reverent study of her laws could wean man from impatient speculations; and now, what is our intellectual activity based on, except on the more thorough mental absorption of Nature? When that absorption is completed the mystic drama will be sunny clear, and all Nature's processes be visible to man, as a Divine Effluence and Life."

True: yet not all the truth. But who knows all the truth?

Not I. "We see through a glass darkly," said St. Paul of old; and what is more, dazzle and weary our eyes, like clumsy microscopists, by looking too long and earnestly through the imperfect and by no means achromatic lens. Enough. I will think of something else. I will think of nothing at all——

Stay. There was a sound at last; a light footfall.

A hare races towards us through the ferns, her great bright eyes full of terror, her ears aloft to catch some sound behind. She sees us, turns short, and vanishes into the gloom. The mare pricks up her ears too, listens, and looks; but not the way the hare has gone. There is something more coming; I can trust the finer sense of the horse, to which (and no wonder) the Middle Age attributed the power of seeing ghosts and fairies impalpable to man's gross eyes. Besides, that hare was not travelling in search of food. She was not loping along, looking around to her right and left; but galloping steadily. She has

been frightened; she has been put up: but what has put her up? And there, far away among the fir-stems, rings the shriek of a startled blackbird. What has put him up?

That, old mare, at sight whereof your wise eyes widen till they are ready to burst, and your ears are first shot forward towards your nose, and then laid back with vicious intent. Stand still, old woman! Do you think still, after fifteen winters, that you can catch a fox?

A fox it is indeed; a great dog-fox, as red as the fir-stems between which he glides. And yet his legs are black with fresh peat-stains.

He is a hunted fox; but he has not been up long.

The mare stands like a statue; but I can feel her trembling between my knees. Positively he does not see us. He sits down in the middle of a ride, turns his great ears right and left, and then scratches one of them with his hind foot, seemingly to make it hear the better. Now he is up again and on.

Beneath yon firs, some hundred yards away, standeth, or rather lieth, for it is on dead flat ground, the famous castle of Malepartus, which beheld the base murder of Lampe the hare, and many a seely soul besides. I knew it well; a patch of sand-heaps, mingled with great holes, amid the twining fir-roots; ancient home of the last of the wild beasts. And thither, unto Malepartus safe and strong, trots Reinecke, where he hopes to be snug among the labyrinthine windings, and innumerable starting-holes, as the old apologue has it, of his ballium, covert-way, and donjon keep. Full blown in self-satisfaction he trots, lifting his toes delicately, and carrying his brush aloft, as full of cunning and conceit as that world-famous ancestor of his, whose deeds of unchivalry were the delight, if not the model, of knight and kaiser, lady and burgher, in the Middle Age.

Suddenly he halts at the great gate of Malepartus; examines it with his nose; goes on to a postern; examines that also, and then another, and another; while I perceive afar, projecting from every cave's mouth, the red and green end of a new fir-faggot. Ah, Reinecke! fallen is thy conceit, and fallen thy tail therewith. Thou hast worse foes to deal with than Bruin the bear, or Isegrim the wolf, or any foolish brute whom thy great ancestor outwitted. Man the many-counselled has been beforehand with thee; and the earths are stopped.

One moment he sits down to meditate, and scratches those trusty counsellors, his ears, as if he would tear them off, "revolving swift thoughts in a crafty mind."

He has settled it now. He is up and off—and at what a pace! Out of the way Fauns and Hamadryads, if any be left in the forest. What a pace! And with what a grace besides!

O Reinecke, beautiful thou art, of a surety, in spite of thy great naughtiness! Art thou some fallen spirit, doomed to be hunted for thy sins in this life, and in some future life rewarded for thy swiftness, and grace, and cunning, by being made a very messenger of the immortals? Who knows? Not I.

I am rising fast to Pistol's vein. Shall I ejaculate? Shall I notify? Shall I waken the echoes? Shall I break the grand silence by that scream which the vulgar view-halloo call?

It is needless; for louder and louder every moment swells up a sound which makes my heart leap into my mouth, and my mare into the air.

Music? Well-beloved soul of Hullah, would that thou wert here this day, and not in St. Martin's Hall, to hear that chorus, as it pours round the fir-stems, rings against the roof above, shatters up into a hundred echoes, till the air is alive with sound! You love madrigals, and whatever Weekes, or Wilbye, or Orlando Gibbons sang of old. So do I. Theirs is music fit for men: worthy of the age of heroes, of Drake and Raleigh, Spenser and Shakespeare: but oh, that you could hear this madrigal! If you must have "four parts," then there they are. Deep-mouthed bass, rolling along the ground; rich joyful tenor; wild wistful alto; and leaping up here and there above the throng of sounds, delicate treble shrieks and trills of trembling joy. I know not whether you can fit it into your laws of music, any more than you can the song of that Ariel sprite who dwells in the Æolian harp, or the roar of the waves on the rock, or

> "Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawn,
> And murmuring of innumerable bees."

But music it is. A madrigal? Rather a whole opera of "*Der Freischutz*"—demoniac element and all—to judge by those red lips, fierce eyes, wild, hungry voices; and such as should make Reinecke, had he strong æsthetic sympathies, well content to be hunted from his cradle to his grave, that such

sweet sounds might by him enrich the air. Heroes of old were glad to die, if but some *vates-sacer* would sing their fame in worthy strains: and shalt not thou too be glad, Reinecke? Content thyself with thy fate. Music soothes care; let it soothe thine, as thou runnest for thy life; thou shalt have enough of it in the next hour. For as the Etruscans (says Athenæus) were so luxurious that they used to flog their slaves to the sound of the flute, so shall luxurious Chanter and Challenger, Sweetlips and Melody, eat thee to the sound of rich organ-pipes, that so thou mayest,

"Like that old fabled swan, in music die."

And now appear, dim at first and distant, but brightening and nearing fast, many a right good-fellow and many a right good horse. I know three out of four of them, their private histories, the private histories of their horses; and could tell you many a good story of them: but shall not, being an English gentleman, and not an American *littérateur*. They may not all be very clever, or very learned, or very anything except gallant men; but they are all good enough company for me, or anyone; and each has his own *specialité*, for which I like him. That huntsman I have known for fifteen years, and sat many an hour beside his father's death-bed. I am godfather to that whip's child. I have seen the servants of the hunt, as I have the hounds, grow up round me for two generations, and I feel for them as old friends; and like to look into their brave, honest, weather-beaten faces. That red coat there, I knew him when he was a school-boy; and now he is a captain in the Guards, and won his Victoria Cross at Inkermann: that bright green coat is the best farmer, as well as the hardest rider, for many a mile round; one who plays, as he works, with all his might, and might have been a *beau sabreur* and colonel of dragoons. So might that black coat, who now brews good beer, and stands up for the poor at the Board of Guardians, and rides, like the green coat, as well as he works. That other black coat is a county banker; but he knows more of the fox than the fox knows of himself, and where the hounds are, there will he be this day. That red coat has hunted kangaroo in Australia: that one, as clever and good as he is brave and simple, has stood by Napier's side in many an Indian fight: that

one won his Victoria at Delhi, and was cut up at Lucknow, with more than twenty wounds: that one has—but what matter to you who each man is? Enough that each can tell one a good story, welcome one cheerfully, and give one out here, in the wild forest, the wholesome feeling of being at home among friends.

There is music, again, if you will listen, in the soft tread of these hundred horse-hoofs upon the spongy vegetable soil. They are trotting now in "common time." You may hear the whole Croats' March (the finest trotting march in the world) played by those iron heels; the time, as it does in the Croats' March, breaking now and then, plunging, jingling, struggling through heavy ground, bursting for a moment into a jubilant canter as it reaches a sound spot.

The hounds feather a moment round Malepartus, puzzled by the windings of Reinecke's footsteps. You can hear the flap and snort of the dogs' nostrils as they canter round; and one likes it. It is exciting: but why—who can tell?

What beautiful creatures they are too! Next to a Greek statue (I mean a real old Greek one: for I am a thoroughly anti-pre-Raphaelite benighted pagan heathen in taste, and intend some day to get up a Cinque-Cento Club, for the total abolition of Gothic art)—next to a Greek statue, I say, I know few such combinations of grace and strength as in a fine fox-hound. It is the beauty of the Theseus—light and yet massive; and light not in spite of its masses, but on account of the perfect disposition of them. I do not care for grace in man, woman, or animal, which is obtained (as in the old German painters) at the expense of honest flesh and blood. It may be all very pure, and unearthly, and saintly, and what not; but it is not healthy; and, therefore, it is not really high art, let it call itself such as much as it likes. The highest art must be that in which the outward is the most perfect symbol of the inward; and, therefore, a healthy soul can be only expressed by a healthy body; and starved limbs and a hydrocephalous forehead must be either taken as incorrect symbols of spiritual excellence, or as—what they were really meant for—symbols of certain spiritual diseases which were in the Middle Age considered as ecclesiastical graces and virtues. Wherefore I like pagan and naturalist art; consider Titian and Correggio as

unappreciated geniuses, whose excellences the world will in some saner mood rediscover; hold, in direct opposition to Rio, that Raphael improved steadily all his life through, and that his noblest works are not his somewhat simpering Madonnas and somewhat impish Bambinos (very lovely though they are), but his great, coarse, naturalist, Protestant cartoons, which (with Andrea Mantegna's "Heathen Triumph") Cromwell saved for the British nation. Probably no one will agree with all this for the next quarter of a century; but after that I have hopes. The world will grow tired of pretending to admire Manichæan pictures in an age of natural science; and Art will let the dead bury their dead, and beginning again where Michael Angelo and Raphael left off, work forward into a nobler, truer, freer, and more divine school than the world has yet seen—at least, so I hope.

And all this has grown out of those fox-hounds. Why not? Theirs is the sort of form which expresses to me what I want art to express—nature not limited, but developed, by high civilization. The old savage ideal of beauty was the lion, type of mere massive force. That was succeeded by an over-civilized ideal, say the fawn, type of delicate grace. By cunning breeding and choosing, through long centuries, man has combined both, and has created the fox-hound—lion and fawn in one; just as he might create noble human beings, did he take half as much trouble about politics (in the true old sense of the word) as he does about fowls. Look at that old hound, who stands doubtful, looking up at his master for advice. Look at the severity, delicacy, lightness of every curve. His head is finer than a deer's; his hind legs tense as steel springs; his fore legs straight as arrows: and yet see the depth of chest, the sweep of loin, the breadth of paw, the mass of arm and thigh; and if you have an eye for form, look at the absolute majesty of his attitude at this moment. Majesty is the only word for it. If he were six feet high, instead of twenty-three inches, with what animal on earth could you compare him? Is it not a joy to see such a thing alive? It is to me, at least. I should like to have one in my study all day long, as I would have a statue or a picture; and when Mr. Morrell gave (as they say) two hundred guineas for Hercules alone, I believe the dog was well worth the money, only to look at. But I am a minute philosopher.

I cap them on to the spot at which Reinecke disappeared. Old Virginal's stern flourishes; instantly her pace quickens. One whimper, and she is away full-mouthed through the wood, and the pack after her: but not I.

I am not going with them. My hunting days are over. Let it suffice that I have, in the days of my vanity, "drunk delight of battle with my peers, far on the ringing plains" of many a county, grass and forest, down and vale. No, my gallant friends. You know that I could ride, if I chose; and I am vain enough to be glad that you know it. But useless are your coaxings, solicitations, wavings of honest right hands. "Life," as my friend Tom Brown says, "is not all beer and skittles"; it is past two now and I have four old women to read to at three, and an old man to bury at four; and I think, on the whole, that you will respect me the more for going home and doing my duty. That I should like to see this fox fairly killed, or even fairly lost, I deny not. That I should like it as much as I can like any earthly and outward thing, I deny not. But sugar to one's bread and butter is not good; and if my winter garden represent the bread and butter, then will fox-hunting stand to it in the relation of superfluous and unwholesome sugar; so farewell; and long may your noble sport prosper—"the image of war with only half its danger," to train you and your sons after, into gallant soldiers—full of

> "The reason firm, the temperate will,
> Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill."

So homeward I go through a labyrinth of fir-stem and, what is worse, fir-stumps, which need both my eyes and my horse's at every moment; and woe to the "anchorite," as old Bunbury names him, who carries his nose in the air, and his fore feet well under him. Woe to the self-willed or hard-hided horse who cannot take the slightest hint of the heel, and wince hind legs or fore out of the way of those jagged points which lie in wait for him. Woe, in fact, to all who are clumsy or cowardly, or in any wise not "masters of the situation."

Pleasant riding it is, though, if you dare look anywhere but over your horse's nose, under the dark roof, between the red fir-pillars, in that rich subdued light. Now I plunge into a gloomy dell, wherein is no tinkling rivulet, ever pure; but

instead a bog, hewn out into a chess-board of squares, parted by deep narrow ditches some twenty feet apart. Blundering among the stems I go, fetlock-deep in peat, and jumping at every third stride one of the said uncanny gripes, half hidden in long hassock grass. O *Aira cæspitosa*, most stately and most variable of British grasses, why will you always grow where you are not wanted? Through you the mare all but left her hinds legs in that last gripe. Through you a red coat ahead of me, avoiding one of your hassocks, jumped with his horse's nose full butt against a fir-stem, and stopped,

> "As one that is struck dead
> By lightning ere he falls,"

as we shall soon, in spite of the mare's cleverness. Would we were out of this!

Out of it we shall be soon. I see daylight ahead at last, bright between the dark stems. Up a steep slope, and over a bank which is not very big, but being composed of loose gravel and peat mould, gives down with me, nearly sending me head over heels in the heather, and leaving me a sheer gap to scramble through, and out on the open moor.

Grand old moor! stretching your brown flats right away toward Windsor for many a mile. Far to our right is the new Wellington College, looking stately enough here all alone in the wilderness, in spite of its two ugly towers and pinched waist. Close over me is the long fir-fringed ride of Easthampstead, ending suddenly in Cæsar's camp; and hounds and huntsmen are already far ahead, and racing up the Roman road, which the clods of these parts, unable to give a better account of it, call the Devil's Highway.

Racing indeed; for as Reinecke gallops up the narrow heather-fringed pathway, he brushes off his scent upon the twigs at every stride; and the hounds race after him, showing no head indeed, and keeping, for convenience, in one long line upon the track: but going heads up, sterns down, at a pace which no horse can follow. I only hope they may not overrun the scent.

They have overrun it; halt, and put their heads down a moment. But with one swift cast in full gallop they have hit it off again, fifty yards away in the heather, long ere the horse-

men are up to them; for those hounds can hunt a fox because they are not hunted themselves, and so have learned to trust themselves, and act for themselves; as boys should learn at school, even at the risk of a mistake or two. Now they are showing head indeed, down a half-cleared valley, and over a few ineffectual turnips withering in the peat, a patch of growing civilization in the heart of the wilderness; and then over the brook, while I turn slowly away, through a green wilderness of self-sown firs.

There they stand in thousands, the sturdy Scots, colonizing the desert in spite of frost, and gales, and barrenness; and clustering together, too, as Scotsmen always do abroad, little and big, everyone under his neighbor's lee, according to the good old proverb of their native land, "Caw me, and I'll caw thee."

I respect them, those Scotch firs. I delight in their forms, from James I's gnarled giants up in Bramshill Park—the only place in England where a painter can learn what Scotch firs are—down to the little green pyramids which stand up out of the heather, triumphant over tyranny, and the strange woes of an untoward youth. Seven years on an average have most of them spent in ineffectual efforts to become a foot high. Nibbled off by hares, trodden down by cattle, cut down by turf-parers, seeing hundreds of their brethren cut up and carried off in the turf-fuel, they are as gnarled and stubbed near the ground as an old thorn-bush in a pasture. But they have conquered at last, and are growing away, eighteen inches a year, with fair green brushes silver-tipped, reclothing the wilderness with a vegetation which it has not seen for—how many thousand years?

No man can tell. For when last the Scotch fir was indigenous to England, and, mixed with the larch, stretched in one vast forest from Norfolk into Wales, England was not as it is now. Snowdon was, it may be, fifteen thousand feet in height, and from the edges of its glaciers the marmot and the musk-ox, the elk and the bear, wandered down into the lowlands, and the hyena and the lion dwelt in those caves where fox and badger only now abide. And how did the Scotch fir die out? did the whole land sink slowly from its sub-Alpine elevation into a warmer climate below? Or was it never raised at all?

Did some change of the Atlantic sea-floor turn for the first time the warm Gulf Stream to these shores; and with its soft sea-breezes melt away the "Age of Ice," till glaciers and pines, marmots and musk-oxen, perspired to death, and vanished for an *æon?* Who knows? Not I. But of the fact there can be no doubt. Whether, as we hold traditionally here, the Scotch fir was reintroduced by James I when he built Bramshill for Raleigh's hapless pet, Henry the Prince, or whatever may have been the date of their reintroduction, here they are, and no on can turn them out. In countless thousands the winged seeds float down the southwest gales from the older trees; and every seed which falls takes root in ground which, however unable to bear broad-leaved trees, is ready by long rest for the seeds of the needle-leaved ones. Thousands perish yearly; but the eastward march of the whole, up hill and down dale, is sure and steady as that of Lynceus's Goths in Goethe's "Helena"—

"Ein lang und breites Volksgewicht,
Der erste wusste vom letzen nicht.

Der erste fiel, der zweite stand,
Des dritten Lanze war zur Hand,
Ein jeder hundertfach gestärkt;
Erschlagene Tausend unbemerkt,"

—till, as you stand upon some eminence, you see, stretching to the eastward of each tract of older trees, a long cloud of younger ones, like a green comet's tail—I wish their substance was as yielding this day. Truly beautiful—grand indeed to me it is—to see young live Nature thus carrying on a great savage process in the heart of this old and seemingly all-artificial English land; and reproducing here, as surely as in the Australian bush, a native forest, careless of mankind. Still, I wish it were easier to ride through. Stiff are those Scotchmen, and close and stout they stand by each other, and claw at you as you twist through them, the biggest aiming at your head or, even worse, at your knees; while the middle-sized slip their brushes between your thigh and the saddle; and the little babies tickle your horse's stomach, or twine about his fore feet. Whish—whish; we are enveloped in what seems an atmosphere of scrubbing-brushes. Fain would I shut my eyes; but dare not,

or I shall ride against a tree. Whish—whish; alas for the horse which cannot wind and turn like a hare! Plunge—stagger. What is this? A broad line of ruts; perhaps some Celtic trackway, two thousand years old, now matted over with firs; dangerous enough out on the open moor, when only masked by a line of higher and darker heath: but doubly dangerous now when masked by dark undergrowth. You must find your own way here, mare. I will positively have nothing to do with it. I disclaim all responsibility. There are the reins on your neck; do what you will, only do something—and if you can, get forward, and not back.

There is daylight at last, and fresh air. I trot contemptuously through the advanced skirmishers of the Scotch invading army; and watch my friends some mile and a half off, who have threaded a practicable trackway through a long dreary yellow bog, too wet for firs to root in, and are away in "a streamer." Now a streamer is produced in this wise. There is but one possible gap in a bank, one possible ford in a brook; one possible path in a cover; and as each man has to wait till the man before him gets through, and then gallops on, each man loses twenty yards or more on the man before him: wherefore, by all laws of known arithmetic, if ten men tail through a gap, then will the last of the ten find himself two hundred yards behind the foremost, which process several times repeated, produces the phenomenon called a streamer, viz., twenty men galloping absurdly as hard as they can, in a line half a mile long, and in humors which are celestial in the few foremost, contented in the central, and gradually becoming darker in the hindmost; till in the last man they assume a hue altogether Tartarean. Farewell, brave gentlemen! I watch, half sadly, half self-contented, the red coats scattered like sparks of fire over hill and dale, and turn slowly homeward, to visit my old women.

I pass through a gateway, out upon a village green, planted with rows of oaks, surrounded by trim, sunny cottages, a pleasant oasis in the middle of the wilderness. Across the village cricket-ground—we are great cricketers in these parts, and long may the good old game live among us; and then up another hollow lane, which leads between damp shaughs and copses toward the further moor.

Curious things to a minute philosopher are these same hol-

low lanes. They set him on archæological questions, more than he can solve; and I meditate as I go, how many centuries it took to saw through the warm sandbanks this dyke ten feet deep, up which he trots, with the oak-boughs meeting over his head. Was it ever worth men's while to dig out the soil? Surely not. The old method must have been, to remove the softer upper spit, till they got to tolerably hard ground; and then, Macadam's metal being as yet unknown, the rains and the wheels of generations sawed it gradually deeper and deeper, till this road-ditch was formed. But it must have taken centuries to do it. Many of these hollow lanes, especially those on flat ground, must be as old or older than the Conquest. In Devonshire I am sure that they are. But there many of them, one suspects, were made not of malice, but of cowardice prepense. Your indigenous Celt was, one fears, a sneaking animal, and liked to keep when he could under cover of banks and hill-sides; while your bold Roman made his raised roads straight over hill and dale, as "ridge-ways" from which, as from an eagle's eyrie, he could survey the conquered lowlands far and wide. It marks strongly the difference between the two races, that difference between the Roman paved road with its established common way for all passengers, its regular stations and milestones, and the Celtic trackway winding irresolutely along in innumerable ruts, parting to meet again, as if each savage (for they were little better) had taken his own fresh path when he found the next line of ruts too heavy for his cattle. Around the spurs of Dartmoor I have seen many ancient roads, some of them long disused, which could have been hollowed out for no other purpose but that of concealment.

So I go slowly up the hill, till the valley lies beneath me like a long, green garden between its two banks of brown moor; and on through a cheerful little green, with red brick cottages scattered all round, each with its large, neat garden, and beehives, and pigs, and geese, and turf-stack, and clipped yews and hollies before the door, and rosy, dark-eyed children, and all the simple healthy comforts of a wild "heth-cropper's" home. When he can, the good-man of the house works at farm labor, or cuts his own turf; and when work is scarce, he cuts copses and makes heath-brooms, and does a little poaching. True, he seldom goes to church, save to be christened, married, or buried;

but he equally seldom gets drunk. For church and public stand together two miles off; so that social wants sometimes bring their own compensations with them, and there are two sides to every question.

Hark! A faint, dreary hollo off the moor above. And then another, and another. My friends may trust it; for the clod of these parts delights in the chase like any bare-legged Paddy, and casts away flail and fork wildly, to run, shout, assist, and interfere in all possible ways, out of pure love. The descendant of many generations of broom-squires and deer-stealers, the instinct of sport is strong within him still, though no more of the King's deer are to be shot in the winter turnip-fields, or worse, caught by an apple-baited hook hung from an orchard bough. He now limits his aspirations to hares and pheasants, and too probably once in his life, "hits the keeper into the river," and reconsiders himself for awhile after over a crank in Winchester gaol. Well, he has his faults; and I have mine. But he is a thorough good-fellow nevertheless; quite as good as I: civil, contented, industrious, and often very handsome; and a far shrewder fellow too—owing to his dash of wild forest blood, from gypsy, highwayman, and what not—than his bullet-headed and flaxen-polled cousin, the pure South-Saxon of the Chalk-downs. Dark-haired he is, ruddy, and tall of bone; swaggering in his youth; but when he grows old, a thorough gentleman, reserved, stately, and courteous as a prince. Sixteen years have I lived with him hail fellow well met, and never yet had a rude word or action from him.

With him I have cast in my lot, to live and die, and be buried by his side; and to him I go home contented, to look after his petty interests, cares, sorrows—petty truly, seeing that they include the whole primal mysteries of life—food, raiment, and work to earn them withal; love and marriage, birth and death, right-doing and wrong-doing, "*Schicksal und eigene Schuld*"; and all those commonplaces of humanity which in the eyes of a minute philosopher are most divine, because they are most commonplace—catholic as the sunshine and the rain which come down from the Heavenly Father, alike upon the evil and the good. As for doing fine things, my friend, with you, I have learned to believe that I am not set to do fine things, simply because I am not able to do them; and as for see-

ing fine things, with you, I have learned to see the sight—as well as to try to do the duty—which lies nearest me; and to comfort myself with the fancy that if I make good use of my eyes and brain in this life, I shall see—if it be of any use to me—all the fine things, or perhaps finer still, in the life to come. But if not—what matter? In any life, in any state, however simple or humble, there will be always sufficient to occupy a minute philosopher: and if a man be busy, and busy about his duty, what more does he require, for time or for eternity?

THE COLLECTIVE WISDOM

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GRACEFULNESS

—

PERSONAL BEAUTY

—

BY

HERBERT SPENCER

HERBERT SPENCER

Herbert Spencer was born at Derby, England, on April 27, 1820. He was educated by his father, W. G. Spencer, a teacher, chiefly of mathematics, and his uncle, the Rev. Thomas Spencer, a clergyman of the Established Church, well known for his liberal opinions on political and ecclesiastical questions. At the age of seventeen he became a civil engineer; but after about eight years abandoned the profession in consequence of the large influx of young men brought into it during the railway mania, and the consequent undue competition. During the eight years of his engineering life he contributed various papers to the "Civil Engineer's and Architect's Journal." His first productions in general literature were of a series of letters on the "Proper Sphere of Government," published in the Nonconformist newspaper in 1842, which were some time afterwards reprinted as a pamphlet. From the close of 1848 to the middle of 1853 he was engaged on the "Economist," and during this time he published his first important work, "Social Statics." Shortly afterwards he began to write for the quarterly reviews, most of his articles appearing in the "Westminster," and others in the "North British," "British Quarterly," "Edinburgh," "Medico-Chirurgical," etc. In 1855 appeared his "Principles of Psychology." In 1860 he commenced a connected series of philosophical works, designed to unfold in their natural order the principles of biology, psychology, sociology, and morality. To this series belong, besides the "Psychology," "First Principles," "Principles of Biology," and "Principles of Sociology." "Education" was published in 1861; "The Study of Sociology" in 1873; "Descriptive Sociology" in 1873-78, and "Data of Ethics" and "Ceremonial Institutions" in 1879; "Political Institutions," in 1882; "The Man versus the State" in 1884; "Ecclesiastical Institutions" in 1885; a revised edition of his "Essays" in 1891; and "Principles of Ethics" (including "Data of Ethics") in 1893. The final volume of "Principles of Sociology," completing the "System of Synthetic Philosophy," appeared in 1896.

Spencer has developed and applied universally the theory of evolution. He may be described, in general terms, as a Darwinist, seeking to ascertain by deduction the physical and psychical laws underlying social life in order to make them the basis of philosophy, instead of abstract speculation. He is a master of style, and his extensive reading enables him to employ a wealth of illustration, which makes his writings most fascinating to all who are interested in the subjects treated. "The Collective Wisdom," "Gracefulness," and "Personal Beauty" are taken from his collected "Essays."

THE COLLECTIVE WISDOM

A TEST of senatorial capacity is a desideratum. We rarely learn how near the mark or how wide of the mark the calculations of statesmen are; the slowness and complexity of social changes, hindering, as they do, the definite comparison of results with anticipations. Occasionally, however, parliamentary decisions admit of being definitely valued. One which was arrived at a few weeks ago furnished a measure of legislative judgment too significant to be passed by.

On the edge of the Cotswolds, overhanging the valley of the Severn, occur certain springs, which, as they happen to be at the end of the longest of the hundred streams which join to form the Thames, have been called by a poetical fiction "the sources of the Thames." Names, even when poetical fictions, suggest conclusions; and conclusions drawn from words instead of facts are equally apt to influence conduct. Thus it happened that, when, recently, there was formed a company for supplying Cheltenham and some other places from these springs, great opposition arose. The "Times" published a paragraph, headed, "Threatened Absorption of the Thames," stating that the application of this company to Parliament had "caused some little consternation in the city of Oxford, and will, doubtless, throughout the valley of the Thames;" and that "such a measure, if carried out, will diminish the water of that noble river a million of gallons per day." A million is an alarming word—suggests something necessarily vast. Translating words into thoughts, however, would have calmed the fears of the "Times" paragraphist. Considering that a million gallons would be contained by a room fifty-six feet cube, the nobility of the Thames would not be much endangered by the deduction. The simple fact is, that the current of the Thames, above the point at which the tides influence it,

discharges in twenty-four hours eight hundred times this amount.

When the bill of this proposed water company was brought before the House of Commons for second reading it became manifest that the imaginations of members were affected by such expressions as the "sources of the Thames," and "a million gallons daily," in much the same way as the imaginations of the ignorant. Though the quantity of water proposed to be taken bears to the quantity which runs over Teddington weir about the same ratio that a yard bears to half a mile, it was thought by many members that its loss would be a serious evil. No method of measurement would be accurate enough to detect the difference between the Thames as it now is, and the Thames minus the Cerney springs; and yet it was gravely stated in the House that, were the Thames diminished in the proposed way, "the proportion of sewage to pure water would be seriously increased." Taking a minute out of twelve hours would be taking as large a proportion as the Cheltenham people wish to take from the Thames. Nevertheless, it was contended that to let Cheltenham have this quantity would be "to rob the towns along the banks of the Thames of their rights." Though, of the Thames flowing by each of these towns, some 999 parts out of 1000 pass by unused, it was held that a great injustice would be committed were one or two of these 999 parts appropriated by the inhabitants of a town who can now obtain daily but four gallons of foul water per head.

But the apparent inability thus shown to think of causes and effects in something like their true quantitive relations, was still more conspicuously shown. It was stated by several members that the Thames Navigation Commissioners would have opposed the bill if the commission had not been bankrupt, and this hypothetical opposition appeared to have weight. If we may trust the reports, the House of Commons listened with gravity to the assertion of one of its members, that, if the Cerney springs were diverted, "shoals and flats would be created." Not a laugh nor a cry of "Oh! oh," appears to have been produced by the prophecy, that the volume and scouring power of the Thames would be seriously affected by taking away from it twelve gallons per second! The whole quantity which these springs supply would be delivered by a cur-

rent moving through a pipe one foot in diameter at the rate of less than two miles per hour. Yet, when it was said that the navigability of the Thames would be injuriously affected by this deduction, there were no shouts of derision. On the contrary, the House rejected the Cheltenham Water Bill by a majority of one hundred and eighteen to eighty-eight. It is true that the data were not presented in the above shape. But the remarkable fact is, that, even in the absence of a specific comparison, it should not have been at once seen that the water of springs, which drain but a few square miles at most, can be but an inappreciable part of the water which runs out of the Thames basin, extending over several thousand square miles. In itself, this is a matter of small moment. It interests us here simply as an example of legislative judgment. The decision is one of those small holes through which a wide prospect may be seen, and a disheartening prospect it is. In a very simple case there is here displayed a scarcely credible inability to see how much effect will follow so much cause; and yet the business of the assembly exhibiting this inability is that of dealing with causes and effects of an extremely involved kind. All the processes going on in society arise from the concurrences and conflicts of human actions, which are determined in their nature and amounts by the human constitution as it now is—are as much results of natural causation as any other results, and equally imply definite quantitive relations between causes and effects. Every legislative act presupposes a diagnosis and a prognosis; both of them involving estimations of social forces and the work done by them. Before it can be remedied, an evil must be traced to its source in the motives and ideas of men as they are, living under the social conditions which exist—a problem requiring that the actions tending toward the result shall be identified, and that there shall be something like a true idea of the quantities of their effects as well as the qualities. A further estimation has then to be made of the kinds and degrees of influence that will be exerted by the additional factors which the proposed law will set in motion: what will be the resultants produced by the new forces co-operating with pre-existing forces—a problem still more complicated than the other.

We are quite prepared to hear the unhesitating reply, that

men incapable of forming an approximately true judgment on a matter of simple physical causation may yet be very good law-makers. So obvious will this be thought by most, that a tacit implication to the contrary will seem to them absurd; and that it will seem to them absurd is one of the many indications of the profound ignorance that prevails. It is true that mere empirical generalizations which men draw from their dealings with their fellows suffice to give them some ideas of the proximate effects which new enactments will work: and, seeing these, they think they see as far as needful. Discipline in physical science, however, would help to show them the utter inadequacy of calculating consequences based on simple data. And if there needs proof that calculations of consequences so based are inadequate, we have it in the enormous labor annually entailed on the Legislature in trying to undo the mischiefs it has previously done.

Should any say that it is useless to dwell on this incompetency, seeing that the House of Commons contains the select of the nation, than whose judgments no better are to be had, we reply, that there may be drawn two inferences which have important practical bearings. In the first place, we are shown how completely the boasted intellectual discipline of our upper classes fails to give them the power of following out in thought, with any correctness, the sequences of even simple phenomena, much less those of complex phenomena. And, in the second place, we may draw the corollary, that if the sequences of those complex phenomena which societies display, difficult beyond all others to deal with, are so unlikely to be understood by them, they may advantageously be restricted in their interferences with them.

In one direction, especially, shall we see reason to resist the extension of legislative action. There has of late been urged the proposal that the class contemptuously described as dividing its energies between business and bethels shall have its education regulated by the class which might, with equal justice, be described as dividing its energies between club-rooms and game preserves. This scheme does not seem to us a hopeful one. Considering that during the last half century our society has been remoulded by ideas that have come from the proposed pupil, and have had to overcome the dogged resist-

ance of the proposed teacher, the propriety of the arrangement is not obvious. And if the propriety of the arrangement is not obvious on the face of it, still less obvious does it become when the competency of the proposed teacher comes to be measured. British intelligence, as distilled through the universities and redistilled into the House of Commons, is a product admitting of such great improvement in quality, that we should be sorry to see the present method of manufacture extended and permanently established.

GRACEFULNESS

WE do not ascribe gracefulness to cart-horses, tortoises, and hippopotami, in all of which the powers of movement are relatively inferior; but we ascribe it to greyhounds, antelopes, race-horses, all of which have highly efficient locomotive organs. What, then, is this distinctive peculiarity of structure and action which we call grace?

One night while watching a dancer, and inwardly condemning her *tours de force* as barbarisms which would be hissed were not people such cowards as always to applaud what they think it the fashion to applaud, I remarked that the truly graceful motions occasionally introduced were those performed with comparatively little effort. After calling to mind sundry confirmatory facts, I presently concluded that grace, as applied to motion, describes motion that is effected with economy of force; grace, as applied to animal forms, describes forms capable of this economy; grace, as applied to postures, describes postures which may be maintained with this economy; and grace, as applied to inanimate objects, describes such as exhibit certain analogies to these attitudes and forms.

That this generalization, if not the whole truth, contains at least a large part of it, will, I think, become obvious, on considering how habitually we couple the words *easy* and *graceful;* and still more, on calling to mind some of the facts on which this association is based. The attitude of a soldier, drawing himself bolt upright when his sergeant shouts "attention," is more remote from gracefulness than when he relaxes at the words "stand at ease." The *gauche* visitor sitting stiffly on the edge of his chair, and his self-possessed host, whose limbs and body dispose themselves as convenience dictates, are contrasts as much in effort as in elegance. When standing, we commonly economize power by throwing the weight chiefly on one leg, which we straighten to make it serve as a column, while we

relax the other; and to the same end, we allow the head to lean somewhat on one side. Both these attitudes are imitated in sculpture as elements of grace.

Turning from attitudes to movements, current remarks will be found to imply the same relationship. No one praises as graceful a walk that is irregular or jerking, and so displays waste of power; no one sees any beauty in the waddle of a fat man, or the trembling steps of an invalid, in both of which effort is visible. But the style of walking we admire is moderate in velocity, perfectly rhythmical, unaccompanied by violent swinging of the arms, and giving us the impression that there is no conscious exertion, while there is no force thrown away. In dancing, again, the prevailing difficulty—the proper disposal of the arms—well illustrates the same truth. Those who fail in overcoming this difficulty give the spectator the impression that their arms are a trouble to them; they are held stiffly in some meaningless attitude, at an obvious expense of power; they are checked from swinging in the directions in which they would naturally swing; or they are so moved that, instead of helping to maintain the equilibrium, they endanger it. A good dancer, on the contrary, makes us feel that, so far from the arms being in the way, they are of great use. Each motion of them, while it seems naturally to result from a previous motion of the body, is turned to some advantage. We perceive that it has facilitated instead of hindered the general action; or, in other words—that an economy of effort has been achieved. Anyone wishing to distinctly realize this fact may readily do so by studying the action of the arms in walking. Let him place his arms close to his sides, and there keep them, while walking with some rapidity. He will unavoidably fall into a backward and forward motion of the shoulders, of a wriggling, ungraceful character. After persevering in this for a space, until he finds that the action is not only ungraceful but fatiguing, let him allow his arms to swing as usual. The wriggling of the shoulders will cease; the body will move equably forward; and comparative ease will be felt. On analyzing this fact, he may perceive that the backward motion of each arm is simultaneous with the forward motion of the corresponding leg. If he will attend to his muscular sensations he will find that this backward swing of the arm is a counterbalance to the

forward swing of the leg; and that it is easier to produce this counterbalance by moving the arm than by contorting the body, as he otherwise must do.[1]

The action of the arms in walking being thus understood, it will be manifest that the graceful employment of them in dancing is simply a complication of the same thing; and that a good dancer is one having so acute a muscular perception as at once to feel in what direction the arms should be moved to counterbalance any motion of the body or legs.

This connection between gracefulness and economy of force will be most clearly recognized by those who skate. They will remember that all early attempts, and especially the first timid experiments in figure-skating, are alike awkward and fatiguing; and that the acquirement of skill is also the acquirement of ease. The requisite confidence, and due command of the feet having been obtained, those twistings of the trunk and gyrations of the arms, previously used to maintain the balance, are found needless. The body is allowed to follow without control the impulse given to it; the arms to swing where they will; and it is clearly felt that the graceful way of performing any evolution is the way that costs least effort. Spectators can scarcely fail to see the same fact, if they look for it.

The reference to skating suggests that graceful motion might be defined as motion in curved lines. Certainly, straight and zig-zag movements are excluded from the conception. The sudden stoppages which angular movements imply are its antithesis; for a leading trait of grace is continuity, flowingness. It will be found, however, that this is merely another aspect of the same truth; and that motion in curved lines is economical motion. Given certain successive positions to be assumed by a limb, then if it be moved in a straight line to the first of

[1] A parallel fact, further elucidating this, is supplied by a locomotive engine. On looking at the driving wheel, there will be found, besides the boss to which the connecting rod is attached, a corresponding mass of metal on the opposite side of the wheel, and equidistant from the centre; or, if the engine be one having inside cylinders, then, on looking between the spokes of the driving-wheel, it will be seen that against each crank is a block of iron, similar to it in size, but projecting from the axle in the reverse direction. Evidently, being placed on opposite sides of the centre of motion, each crank and its counterbalance move in opposite directions relatively to the axle; and by so doing, neutralize each other's perturbing effects, and permit a smooth rotation. This relationship which exists between the motions of the counterbalance and the crank is analogous to that which exists between the motions of the arms and legs in walking; and in the early days of railway locomotion, before these counterbalance weights were used, locomotive driving-wheels were subject to violent oscillations, analogous to those jerkings of the shoulders which arise when we walk fast without moving our arms.

these positions, suddenly arrested, and then moved in another direction straight to the second position, and so on, it is clear that at each arrest, the momentum previously given to the limb must be destroyed at a certain cost of force, and a new momentum given to it at a further cost of force; whereas, if, instead of arresting the limb at its first position, its motion be allowed to continue, and a lateral force be impressed to make it diverge towards the second position, a curvilinear motion is the necessary result; and by making use of the original momentum, force is economized.

If the truth of these conclusions respecting graceful movements be admitted, it cannot, I think, be doubted, that graceful form is that kind of form which implies relatively small effort required for self-support, and relatively small effort required for movement. Were it otherwise, there would arise the incongruity that graceful form would either not be associated at all with graceful movement, or that the one would habitually occur in the absence of the other; both which alternatives being at variance with our experience, we must conclude that there exists the relationship indicated. Anyone hesitating to admit this, will, I think, do so no longer on remembering that the animals which we consider graceful are those so slight in build as not to be burdened by their own weight, and those noted for fleetness and agility; while those we class as ungraceful are those which are alike cumbrous and have the faculty of locomotion but little developed. In the case of the greyhound, especially, we see that the particular modification of the canine type in which economy of weight is the most conspicuous, and in which the facility of muscular motion has been brought to the greatest perfection, is the one which we call most graceful.

How trees and inanimate objects should come to have this epithet applied to them seems less obvious. But remembrance of the fact that we commonly, and perhaps unavoidably, regard all objects under a certain anthropomorphic aspect, will help us to understand it. The stiff branch of an oak tree standing out at right angles to the trunk gives us a vague notion of great force expended to keep it in that position; and we call it ungraceful under the same feeling that we call the holding out an arm at right angles to the body ungraceful. Conversely, the lax drooping boughs of a weeping-willow are vaguely as-

sociated with limbs in attitudes requiring little effort to maintain them; and the term graceful, by which we describe these, we apply by metaphor to the boughs of the willow.

I may as well here venture the hypothesis that the idea of grace as displayed by other beings has its subjective basis in sympathy. The same faculty which makes us shudder on seeing another in danger—which sometimes causes motions of our own limbs on seeing another struggle or fall, gives us a vague participation in all the muscular sensations which those around us are experiencing. When their motions are violent or awkward we feel in a slight degree the disagreeable sensations which we should have were they our own. When they are easy, we sympathize with the pleasant sensations they imply in those exhibiting them

PERSONAL BEAUTY

IT is a common opinion that beauty of character and beauty of aspect are unrelated. I have never been able to reconcile myself to this opinion. Indeed, even those who hold it do so in an incomplete sense; for notwithstanding their theory they continue to manifest surprise when they find a mean deed committed by one of noble countenance—a fact implying that underneath their professed induction lies a still living conviction at variance with it.

Whence this conviction? How is it that a belief in the connection between worth and beauty primarily exists in all? It cannot be innate. Must it not, then, be from early experiences? And must it not be that in those who continue to believe in this connection, spite of their reasonings, the early and wide experiences outweigh the later and exceptional ones?

Those who do not admit the relationship between mental and facial beauty usually remark that the true connection is between character and expression. While they doubt, or rather deny, that the permanent forms of the features are in any way indices of the forms of the mind, they assert that the transitory forms of the features are such indices. These positions seem scarcely consistent. For may we not say that the transitory forms, by perpetual repetition, register themselves on the face, and produce permanent forms? Does not a habitual frown by and by leave ineffaceable marks on the brow? Is not a chronic scornfulness presently followed by a modified set in the angles of the mouth? Does not that compression of the lips significant of great determination often stereotype itself; and so give a changed form to the lower part of the face? And if there be any truth in the doctrine of hereditary transmission, must there not be a tendency to the reappearance of these modifications as new types of feature in the offspring? In brief, may we not say that *expression is feature in the mak-*

ing; and that if expression means something, the form of feature produced by it means something?

Possibly it will be urged, in reply, that changes of expression affect only the muscles and skin of the face; that the permanent marks they produce can extend but to these; that, nevertheless, the beauty of a face is mainly dependent upon the form of its bony framework; that hence, in this chief respect, there cannot take place such modifications as those described; and that, therefore, the relationship of aspect to character, while it may hold in the details, does not hold in the generals.

The rejoinder is, that the framework of the face *is* modified by modifications in the tissues which cover it. It is an established doctrine in physiology that throughout the skeleton the greater or less development of bones is dependent on the greater or less development of the attached muscles; that is, on the exercise of them. Hence, permanent changes in the muscular adjustments of the face will be followed by permanent changes in its osseous structure.

Not to dwell in general statements, however, let me cite cases in which the connection between organic ugliness and mental inferiority, and the converse connection between organic beauty and comparative perfection of mind, are distinctly traceable.

It will be admitted that the projecting jaw, characteristic of the lower human races, is a facial defect—is a trait which no sculptor would give to an ideal bust. At the same time, it is a fact that prominence of jaw is associated in the mammalia generally with comparative lack of intelligence. This relationship, it is true, does not hold uniformly. It is not a direct but an indirect one; and is thus liable to be disturbed. Nevertheless, it holds among the higher tribes; and on inquiry we shall see why it holds. In conformity with the law that organs develop in proportion as they are exercised, the jaws are relatively large where the demands made on them are great; and diminish in size as their functions become less numerous and less onerous. Now, in the lower mammals the jaws are the sole organs of manipulation—are used not only for mastication, but for seizing, carrying, gnawing, and, indeed, for everything save locomotion, which is the solitary office performed by the limbs. Advancing upwards, we find that the fore-limbs begin to aid the jaws, and gradually to relieve them of part of their

duties. Some creatures use them for burrowing; some, as the felines, for striking; many, to keep steady the prey they are tearing; and when we arrive at the monkeys, whose fore-limbs possess such power of prehension that objects cannot only be seized, but carried and pulled to pieces by them, we see that the jaws have fewer functions. Accompanying this series of changes we see a double change in the form of the head. The increased complexity of the limbs, the greater variety of actions they perform, and the more numerous perceptions they give, imply a greater development of the brain and of its bony envelope. At the same time, the size of the jaws has diminished in correspondence with the diminution of their functions. And by this simultaneous protrusion of the upper part of the cranium and recession of its lower part, what is called the facial angle has increased.

Well, these coördinate changes in functions and forms have continued during the civilization of the human race. On contrasting the European and the Papuan, we see that what the one cuts in two with knife and fork, the other tears with his jaws; what the one softens by cooking, the other eats in its hard, raw state; the bones which the one utilizes by stewing, the other gnaws; and for sundry of the mechanical manipulations which the one has tools for, the other uses his teeth. From the Bushman state upwards there has been a gradual increase in the complexity of our appliances. We not only use our hands to save our jaws, but we make implements to save our hands; and in our engine-factories may be found implements for the making of implements. This progression in the arts of life has had intellectual progression for its necessary correlative. Each new complication requires a new increment of intelligence for its production; and the daily use of it develops the intelligence still further. Thus that simultaneous protrusion of the brain and recession of the jaws, which among lower animals has accompanied increase of skill and sagacity, has continued during the advance of humanity from barbarism to civilization; and has been, throughout, the result of a discipline involving increase of mental power. And so it becomes manifest that there exists an organic relationship between that protuberance of the jaws which we consider ugly, and a certain inferiority of nature.

Again, that lateral jutting-out of the cheek-bones, which similarly characterizes the lower races of men, and which is similarly thought by us a detraction from beauty, is similarly related to lower habits and lower intelligence. The chief agents in closing the jaws are the temporal muscles; and these are consequently the chief active agents in biting and mastication. In proportion as the jaws have much work, and correspondingly large size, must the temporal muscles be massive. But the temporal muscles pass between the skull and the zygomatic arches, or lateral parts of the cheek-bones. Consequently, where the temporal muscles are massive, the spaces between the zygomatic arches and the skull must be great; and the lateral projection of the zygomatic arches great also, as we see it in the uncivilized and partially civilized races. Like large jaws, therefore, of which it is an accompaniment, excessive size of the cheek-bones is both an ugliness and an index of imperfection.

Certain other defects of feature, between which and mental defects it is not thus easy to trace the connection, may yet be fairly presumed to have such connection in virtue of their constant coexistence with the foregoing ones: alike in the uncivilized races and in the young of the civilized races. Peculiarities of face which we find regularly associated with those just shown to be significant of intellectual inferiority, and which like them disappear as barbarism grows into civilization, may reasonably be concluded to have like them a psychological meaning. Thus is it with depression of the bridge of the nose; which is a characteristic both of barbarians and of our babes, possessed by them in common with the higher quadrumana. Thus, also, is it with that forward opening of the nostrils, which renders them conspicuous in a front view of the face—a trait alike of infants, savages, and apes. And the same may be said of wide-spread *alæ* to the nose, of great width between the eyes, of long mouth, of large mouth—indeed of all those leading peculiarities of feature which are by general consent called ugly.

And then mark how, conversely, the type of face usually admitted to be the most beautiful is one that possesses opposite peculiarities. In the ideal Greek head, the forehead projects so much, and the jaws recede so much, as to render the facial

angle larger than we ever find it in fact. The cheek-bones are so small as scarcely to be traceable. The bridge of the nose is so high as to be almost or quite in a line with the forehead. The *alæ* of the nose join the face with but little obliquity. In the front view the nostrils are almost invisible. The mouth is small, and the upper lip short and deeply concave. The outer angles of the eyes, instead of keeping the horizontal line, as is usual, or being directed upwards, as in the Mongolian type, are directed slightly downwards. And the form of the brow indicates an unusually large frontal sinus—a characteristic entirely absent in children, in the lowest of the human races, and in the allied genera of the *primates*.

If, then, recession of the forehead, protuberance of the jaws, and largeness of the cheek-bones, three leading elements of ugliness, are demonstrably indicative of mental inferiority—if such other facial defects as great width between the eyes, flatness of the nose, spreading of its *alæ*, frontward opening of the nostrils, length of the mouth, and largeness of the lips, are habitually associated with these, and disappear along with them as intelligence increases, both in the race and in the individual; is it not a fair inference that all such faulty traits of feature signify deficiencies of mind? If, further, our ideal of human beauty is characterized not simply by the absence of these traits, but by the presence of opposite ones—if this ideal, as found in sculptures of the Greek gods, has been used to represent superhuman power and intelligence—and if the race so using it were themselves distinguished by a mental superiority, which, if we consider their disadvantages, produced results unparalleled; have we not yet stronger reasons for concluding that the chief components of beauty and ugliness are severally connected with perfection and imperfection of mental nature? And when, lastly, we remember that the variations of feature constituting expression are confessedly significant of character—when we remember that these tend by repetition to organize themselves, to affect not only the skin and muscles but the bones of the face, and to be transmitted to offspring—when we thus find that there is a psychological meaning alike in each passing adjustment of the features, in the marks that habitual adjustments leave, in the marks inherited from ancestors, and in those main outlines of the facial bones and integuments indicating the type

or race; are we not almost forced to the conclusion that all forms of feature are related to forms of mind, and that we consider them admirable or otherwise according as the traits of nature they imply are admirable or otherwise? In the extremes the relationship is demonstrable. That transitory aspects of face accompany transitory mental states, and that we consider these aspects ugly or beautiful according as the mental states they accompany are ugly or beautiful, no one doubts. That those permanent and most marked aspects of face dependent on the bony framework, accompany those permanent and most marked mental states which express themselves in barbarism and civilization; and that we consider as beautiful those which accompany mental superiority, and as ugly those which accompany mental inferiority, is equally certain. And if this connection unquestionably holds in the extremes—if, as judged by average facts, and by our half-instinctive convictions, it also holds more or less visibly in intermediate cases, it becomes an almost irresistible induction that the aspects which please us are the outward correlatives of inward perfections, while the aspects which displease us are the outward correlatives of inward imperfections.

I am quite aware that when tested in detail this induction seems not to be borne out. I know that there are often grand natures behind plain faces; and that fine countenances frequently hide small souls. But these anomalies do not destroy the general truth of the law, any more than the perturbations of planets destroy the general ellipticity of their orbits. Some of them, indeed, may be readily accounted for. There are many faces spoiled by the misproportion of features that are in themselves good; others, by defects of skin, which, though they indicate defects of visceral constitution, have no relationship to the higher parts of the nature. Moreover the facts that have been assigned afford reason for thinking that the leading elements of facial beauty are not directly associated with moral characteristics, but with intellectual ones—are the results of long-continued civilized habits, long cessation of domestic barbarism, long culture of the manipulative powers; and so may coexist with emotional traits not at all admirable. It is true that the highest intellectual manifestations imply a good balance of the higher feelings; but it is also true that great quickness, great sagacity in ordinary affairs, great practical skill, can be

possessed without these, and very frequently are so. The prevalent beauty of the Italians, coexisting though it does with a low moral state, becomes, on this hypothesis, reconcilable with the general induction; as do also many of the anomalies we see around us.

There is, however, a more satisfactory explanation to be offered than any of these—an explanation which I think renders it possible to admit the seeming contradictions which the detailed facts present, and yet to hold by the theory. My own conviction may be expressed in a formula in which I have often before uttered it:—The saying that beauty is but skin-deep is but a skin-deep saying.

All the civilized races, and probably also the uncivilized ones, are of mixed origin; and, as a consequence, have physical and mental constitutions in which are mingled several aboriginal constitutions more or less differing from each other. The heterogeneity of constitution seems to me the chief cause of the incongruities between aspect and nature which we daily meet with. Given a pure race, subject to constant conditions of climate, food, and habits of life, and there is reason to believe that between external appearance and internal structure there will be a constant connection. Unite this race with another equally pure, but adapted to different conditions and having a correspondingly different physique, face, and mind, and there will occur in the descendants, not a homogeneous mean between the two constitutions, but a seemingly irregular combination of characteristics of the one with characteristics of the other—one feature traceable to this race, a second to that, and a third uniting the attributes of both; while in disposition and intellect there will be found a like medley of the two originals.

The fact that the forms and qualities of any offspring are not a mean between the forms and qualities of its parents, but a mixture of them, is illustrated in every family. The features and peculiarities of a child are separately referred by observers to father and mother respectively—nose and mouth to this side; color of the hair and eyes to that—this moral peculiarity to the first; this intellectual one to the second—and so with contour and idiosyncrasies of body. Manifestly if each organ or faculty in a child was an average of the two developments of such organ or faculty in the parents, it would follow that all brothers and

sisters should be alike; or should, at any rate, differ no more than their parents differed from year to year. So far, however, from finding this to be the case, we find not only that great irregularities are produced by mixture of traits, but that there is no constancy in the mode of mixture, or the extent of variation produced by it.

This imperfect union of parental constitutions in the constitutions of offspring is still more clearly illustrated by the reappearance of peculiarities traceable to bygone generations. Forms, dispositions, and diseases, possessed by distant progenitors, habitually come out from time to time in descendants. Some single feature, or some solitary tendency, will again and again show itself, after being apparently lost. It is notoriously thus with gout, scrofula, and insanity. On some of the monumental brasses in our old churches are engraved heads having traits still persistent in the same families. Wherever, as in portrait galleries, a register of ancestral faces has been kept, the same fact is more or less apparent. The pertinacity with which particular characteristics reproduce themselves is well exemplified in America, where traces of negro blood can be detected in the finger nails, when no longer visible in the complexion. Among breeders of animals it is well known that, after several generations in which no visible modifications were traceable, the effects of a cross will suddenly make their appearance. In all which facts we see the general truth that an organism produced from two organisms constitutionally different is not a homogeneous mean; but is made up of components, taken in variable ways and proportions from the originals.

In a recent [1] number of the "Quarterly Journal of the Agricultural Society" were published some facts respecting the mixture of French and English races of sheep, bearing collaterally on this point. Sundry attempts had been made to improve the poor French breeds by our fine English ones. For a long time these attempts failed. The hybrids bore no trace of their English male ancestry; but were as dwarfed and poverty-stricken as their French dams. Eventually the cause of failure was found to lie in the relative heterogeneity and homogeneity of the two constitutions. The superior English sheep were of

[1] This essay (Personal Beauty) was first published by Spencer in 1854.

mixed race; the French sheep, though inferior, were of pure race; and the compound, imperfectly coördinated constitution of the one could not maintain itself against the simple and completely balanced constitution of the other. This, at first a hypothesis, was presently demonstrated. French sheep of mixed constitution having been obtained by uniting two of the pure French breeds, it was found that these hybrid French sheep, when united with the English ones, produced a cross in which the English characteristics were duly displayed. Now, this inability of a mixed constitution to stand its ground against an unmixed one quite accords with the above induction. An unmixed constitution is one in which all the organs are exactly fitted to each other—are perfectly balanced: the system as a whole, is in stable equilibrium. A mixed constitution, on the contrary, being made up of organs belonging to two separate sets, cannot have them in exact fitness—cannot have them perfectly balanced; and a system in comparatively unstable equilibrium results. But in proportion to the stability of the equilibrium will be the power to resist disturbing forces. Hence, when two constitutions in stable and unstable equilibrium respectively, become disturbing forces to each other, the unstable one will be overthrown, and the stable one will assert itself unchanged.

The imperfect coördination of parts in a mixed constitution, and this consequent instability of its equilibrium, are intimately connected with the vexed question of genera, species, and varieties; and, with a view partly to the intrinsic interest of this question, and partly to the further elucidation of the topic in hand, I must again digress.

The current physiological test of distinct species is the production of a non-prolific hybrid. The ability of the offspring to reproduce itself is held to indicate that its parents are of the same species, however widely they may differ in appearance; and its inability to do this is taken as proof that, nearly allied as its parents may seem, they are distinct in kind. Of late, however, facts have been accumulating that tend more and more to throw doubt on this generalization. Cattle-breeders have established it as a general fact that the offspring of two different breeds of sheep or oxen dwindle away in a few generations if allied with themselves; and that a good result can be

obtained only by mixing them with one or other of the original breeds—a fact implying that what is true of so-called species, is, under a modified form, true of varieties also. The same phenomena are observable in the mixtures of different races of men. They, too, it is alleged, cannot maintain themselves as separate varieties; but die out unless there is intermarriage with the originals. In brief, it seems that the hybrids produced from two distinct races of organisms may die out in the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, etc., generation, according as the constitutional difference of the races is greater or less. Now, the experience of the French sheep-breeders, above quoted, suggests a rationale of these various results. For if it be true that an organism produced by two unlike organisms is not a mean between them, but a mixture of parts of the one with parts of the other—if it be true that these parts belonging to two different sets are of necessity imperfectly coördinated; then it becomes manifest that in proportion as the difference between the parent organisms is greater or less, the defects of coördination in the offspring will be greater or less. Whence it follows that, according to the degree of organic incongruity between the parents, we may have every gradation in the offspring, from a combination of parts so incongruous that it will not work at all, up to a combination complete enough to subsist permanently as a race. And this is just what we find in fact. Between organisms widely differing in character, no intermediate organism is possible. When the difference is less, a non-prolific hybrid is produced—an organism so ill coördinated as to be capable only of incomplete life. When the difference is still less, there results an organism capable of reproducing itself; but not of bequeathing to its offspring complete constitutions. And as the degrees of difference are further diminished, the incompleteness of constitution is longer and longer in making its appearance; until we come to those varieties of the same species which differ so slightly that their offspring are as permanent as themselves. Even in these, however, the organic equilibrium seems less perfect; as is illustrated in the case I have quoted. And in connection with this inference, it would be interesting to inquire whether pure constitutions are not superior to mixed ones in their power of maintaining the balance of vital functions under disturbing conditions. Is it not a fact, that the

pure breeds are hardier than the mixed ones? Are not the mixed ones, though superior in size, less capable of resisting unfavorable influences—extremes of temperature, bad food, etc.? And is not the like true of mankind?

Returning to the topic in hand, it is manifest that these facts and reasonings serve further to enforce the general truth that the offspring of two organisms not identical in constitution is a heterogeneous mixture of the two, and not a homogeneous mean between them.

If, then, bearing in mind this truth, we remember the composite character of the civilized races—the mingling in ourselves, for example, of Celt, Saxon, Norman, Dane, with sprinklings of other tribes; if we consider the complications of constitution that have arisen from the unions of these, not in any uniform manner, but with utter irregularity; and if we recollect that the incongruities thus produced pervade the whole nature, mental and bodily, nervous tissue and other tissues—we shall see that there must exist in all of us an imperfect correspondence between parts of the organism that are really related; and that as one manifestation of this there must be more or less of discrepancy between the features and those parts of the nervous system with which they have a physiological connection.

If this be so, then the difficulties which stand in the way of the belief that beauty of character is related to beauty of face are considerably diminished. It becomes possible to admit that plainness may coexist with nobility of nature, and fine features with baseness; and yet to hold that mental and facial perfection are fundamentally connected, and will, when the present causes of incongruity have worked themselves out, be ever found united.

SWEETNESS AND LIGHT

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BY

MATTHEW ARNOLD

MATTHEW ARNOLD

1822—1888

Matthew Arnold, the eldest son of the late Dr. Arnold of Rugby, was born on December 24, 1822, and educated at Winchester and Rugby. In 1840 he was elected scholar of Balliol College, Oxford; in 1844 he obtained the Newdigate prize; and in 1845 he was elected a Fellow of Oriel College. In 1851 he was appointed one of Her Majesty's inspectors of British schools. In 1857 he was elected professor of poetry at Oxford, and in 1859 was sent to the Continent by the English government as assistant to the commissioners appointed to inquire into the state of education in France, Germany, and Holland. In 1865 he again visited the Continent on a like mission.

Arnold was first known as a poet of classic taste and exquisite purity of imagination, but during the latter part of his career he confined himself almost exclusively to prose. His chief productions in verse are "Poems" (1853), containing, among other fine pieces, "Sohrab and Rustum," "Tristram and Yseult," and "Balder"; "Merope" (1858), an attempt to naturalize in English literature the form of the Greek drama; and "New Poems" (1867). His prose writings include his lectures on "Translating Homer" (1861); his "Report on Education in France, Germany, and Holland" (1861); "A French Eton, or Middle-class Education and the State" (1864); "Essays on Criticism" (1865); "Lectures on the Study of Celtic Literature" (1867); "Schools and Universities of the Continent" (1868); "Culture and Anarchy: an Essay in Political and Social Criticism" (1869); "Higher Schools and Universities in Germany" (1874); "St. Paul and Protestantism" (1870); "Literature and Dogma" (1872); "God and the Bible" (1875); "Last Essays on Church and Religion" (1877); "Irish Essays" (1882), and "Discourses on America" (1885).

In referring to his essays, George Saintsbury says that "it might almost be said that Mr. Arnold put himself forth, with a becoming attempt at modesty, as 'Socrates in London,' questioning, probing, rebuking with ironical faithfulness, the British Philistine—a German term, which he, though not the first to import it, made first popular—in literature, in newspapers, in manners, in politics, in philosophy."

Arnold has defined the function of criticism at the present time as "a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world," and he declared that literature is a "criticism of life." Thus, as Professor George Edward Woodberry has pointed out, "Arnold was a critic of civilization more than of books, and aimed at illumination by means of ideas." A large measure of Arnold's success as a critic and essayist is due to his captivating style and his cultured literary method. His essays exhibit pronounced critical acumen, wide reading, inspiring enthusiasm, lucidity of thought, and logical presentation of his theme. "Sweetness and Light" is a delightful essay on the important function that culture—"a study of perfection"—has to perform for mankind. Although the term "Sweetness and Light" was first used by Swift, Matthew Arnold has the distinction of having given it proverbial fame.

SWEETNESS AND LIGHT

THE disparagers of culture make its motive curiosity; sometimes, indeed, they make its motive mere exclusiveness and vanity. The culture which is supposed to plume itself on a smattering of Greek and Latin is a culture which is begotten by nothing so intellectual as curiosity; it is valued either out of sheer vanity and ignorance, or else as an engine of social and class distinction, separating its holder, like a badge or title, from other people who have not got it. No serious man would call this culture, or attach any value to it, as culture, at all. To find the real ground for the very differing estimate which serious people will set upon culture, we must find some motive for culture in the terms of which may lie a real ambiguity; and such a motive the word curiosity gives us.

I have before now pointed out that we English do not, like the foreigners, use this word in a good sense as well as in a bad sense. With us the word is always used in a somewhat disapproving sense. A liberal and intelligent eagerness about the things of the mind may be meant by a foreigner when he speaks of curiosity, but with us the word always conveys a certain notion of frivolous and unedifying activity. In the "Quarterly Review," some little time ago, was an estimate of the celebrated French critic, M. Sainte-Beuve, and a very inadequate estimate it in my judgment was. And its inadequacy consisted chiefly in this: that in our English way it left out of sight the double sense really involved in the word curiosity, thinking enough was said to stamp M. Sainte-Beuve with blame if it was said that he was impelled in his operations as a critic by curiosity, and omitting either to perceive that M. Sainte-Beuve himself, and many other people with him, would consider that this was praiseworthy and not blameworthy, or to point out why it ought really to be accounted worthy of blame and not of praise. For as there is a curiosity about intellectual matters which is futile,

and merely a disease, so there is certainly a curiosity—a desire after the things of the mind simply for their own sakes and for the pleasure of seeing them as they are—which is, in an intelligent being, natural and laudable. Nay, and the very desire to see things as they are, implies a balance and regulation of mind which is not often attained without fruitful effort, and which is the very opposite of the blind and diseased impulse of mind which is what we mean to blame when we blame curiosity. Montesquieu says: "The first motive which ought to impel us to study is the desire to augment the excellence of our nature, and to render an intelligent being yet more intelligent." This is the true ground to assign for the genuine scientific passion, however manifested, and for culture, viewed simply as a fruit of this passion; and it is a worthy ground, even though we let the term curiosity stand to describe it.

But there is of culture another view, in which not solely the scientific passion, the sheer desire to see things as they are, natural and proper in an intelligent being, appears as the ground of it. There is a view in which all the love of our neighbor, the impulses towards action, help, and beneficence, the desire for removing human error, clearing human confusion, and diminishing human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it—motives eminently such as are called social—come in as part of the grounds of culture, and the main and pre-eminent part. Culture is then properly described not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is a study of perfection. It moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing good. As, in the first view of it, we took for its worthy motto Montesquieu's words: "To render an intelligent being yet more intelligent," so, in the second view of it, there is no better motto which it can have than these words of Bishop Wilson: "To make reason and the will of God prevail."

Only, whereas the passion for doing good is apt to be overhasty in determining what reason and the will of God say, because its turn is for acting rather than thinking and it wants to be beginning to act; and whereas it is apt to take its own conceptions, which proceed from its own state of development and share in all the imperfections and immaturities of this, for

a basis of action; what distinguishes culture is, that it is possessed by the scientific passion, as well as by the passion of doing good; that it demands worthy notions of reason and the will of God, and does not readily suffer its own crude conceptions to substitute themselves for them. And knowing that no action or institution can be salutary and stable which are not based on reason and the will of God, it is not so bent on acting and instituting, even with the great aim of diminishing human error and misery ever before its thoughts, but that it can remember that acting and instituting are of little use, unless we know how and what we ought to act and to institute.

This culture is more interesting and more far-reaching than that other which is founded solely on the scientific passion for knowing. But it needs times of faith and ardor, times when the intellectual horizon is opening and widening all round us, to flourish in. And is not the close and bounded intellectual horizon within which we have long lived and moved now lifting up, and are not new lights finding free passage to shine in upon us? For a long time there was no passage for them to make their way in upon us, and then it was of no use to think of adapting the world's action to them. Where was the hope of making reason and the will of God prevail among people who had a routine which they had christened reason and the will of God, in which they were inextricably bound, and beyond which they had no power of looking? But now the iron force of adhesion to the old routine—social, political, religious—has wonderfully yielded; the iron force of exclusion of all which is new has wonderfully yielded. The danger now is, not that people should obstinately refuse to allow anything but their old routine to pass for reason and the will of God, but either that they should allow some novelty or other to pass for these too easily, or else that they should underrate the importance of them altogether, and think it enough to follow action for its own sake, without troubling themselves to make reason and the will of God prevail therein. Now, then, is the moment for culture to be of service, culture which believes in making reason and the will of God prevail, believes in perfection, is the study and pursuit of perfection, and is no longer debarred, by a rigid invincible exclusion of whatever is new, from getting acceptance for its ideas, simply because they are new.

The moment this view of culture is seized, the moment it is regarded not solely as the endeavor to see things as they are, to draw towards a knowledge of the universal order which seems to be intended and aimed at in the world, and which it is a man's happiness to go along with or his misery to go counter to—to learn, in short, the will of God—the moment, I say, culture is considered not merely as the endeavor to see and learn this, but as the endeavor, also, to make it prevail, the moral, social, and beneficent character of culture becomes manifest. The mere endeavor to see and learn the truth for our own personal satisfaction is indeed a commencement for making it prevail, a preparing the way for this, which always serves this, and is wrongly, therefore, stamped with blame absolutely in itself and not only in its caricature and degeneration. But perhaps it has got stamped with blame, and disparaged with the dubious title of curiosity, because in comparison with this wider endeavor of such great and plain utility it looks selfish, petty, and unprofitable.

And religion, the greatest and most important of the efforts by which the human race has manifested its impulse to perfect itself—religion, that voice of the deepest human experience—does not only enjoin and sanction the aim which is the great aim of culture, the aim of setting ourselves to ascertain what perfection is and to make it prevail; but also, in determining generally in what human perfection consists, religion comes to a conclusion identical with that which culture—seeking the determination of this question through all the voices of human experience which have been heard upon it, of art, science, poetry, philosophy, history, as well as of religion, in order to give a greater fulness and certainty to its solution—likewise reaches. Religion says: The kingdom of God is within you; and culture, in like manner, places human perfection in an internal condition, in the growth and predominance of our humanity proper, as distinguished from our animality. It places it in the ever-increasing efficacy and in the general harmonious expansion of those gifts of thought and feeling, which make the peculiar dignity, wealth, and happiness of human nature. As I have said on a former occasion: "It is in making endless additions to itself, in the endless expansion of its powers, in endless growth in wisdom and beauty, that the spirit of the human race

finds its ideal. To reach this ideal, culture is an indispensable aid, and that is the true value of culture." Not a having and a resting, but a growing and a becoming, is the character of perfection as culture conceives it; and here, too, it coincides with religion.

And because men are all members of one great whole, and the sympathy which is in human nature will not allow one member to be indifferent to the rest, or to have a perfect welfare independent of the rest, the expansion of our humanity, to suit the idea of perfection which culture forms, must be a general expansion. Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward. And here, once more, culture lays on us the same obligation as religion, which says, as Bishop Wilson has admirably put it, that " to promote the kingdom of God is to increase and hasten one's own happiness."

But, finally, perfection—as culture from a thorough disinterested study of human nature and human experience learns to conceive it—is an harmonious expansion of all the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature, and is not consistent with the over-development of any one power at the expense of the rest. Here culture goes beyond religion, as religion is generally conceived by us.

If culture, then, is a study of perfection, and of harmonious perfection, general perfection, and perfection which consists in becoming something rather than in having something, in an inward condition of the mind and spirit, not in an outward set of circumstances—it is clear that culture, instead of being the frivolous and useless thing which Mr. Bright, and Mr. Frederic Harrison, and many other Liberals are apt to call it, has a very important function to fulfil for mankind. And this function is particularly important in our modern world, of which the whole civilization is, to a much greater degree than the civilization of Greece and Rome, mechanical and external, and tends constantly to become more so. But above all in our own country has culture a weighty part to perform, because here that me-

chanical character, which civilization tends to take everywhere, is shown in the most eminent degree. Indeed, nearly all the characters of perfection, as culture teaches us to fix them, meet in this country with some powerful tendency which thwarts them and sets them at defiance. The idea of perfection as an inward condition of the mind and spirit is at variance with the mechanical and material civilization in esteem with us, and nowhere, as I have said, so much in esteem as with us. The idea of perfection as a general expansion of the human family is at variance with our strong individualism, our hatred of all limits to the unrestrained swing of the individual's personality, our maxim of "every man for himself." Above all, the idea of perfection as an harmonious expansion of human nature is at variance with our want of flexibility, in our inaptitude for seeing more than one side of a thing, with our intense energetic absorption in the particular pursuit we happen to be following. So culture has a rough task to achieve in this country. Its preachers have, and are likely long to have, a hard time of it, and they will much oftener be regarded, for a great while to come, as elegant or spurious Jeremiahs, than as friends and benefactors. That, however, will not prevent their doing in the end good service, if they persevere. And meanwhile, the mode of action they have to pursue, and the sort of habits they must fight against, ought to be made quite clear for everyone to see, who may be willing to look at the matter attentively and dispassionately.

Faith in machinery is, I said, our besetting danger; often in machinery most absurdly disproportioned to the end which this machinery, if it is to do any good at all, is to serve; but always in machinery, as if it had a value in and for itself. What is freedom but machinery? what is population but machinery? what is coal but machinery? what are railroads but machinery? what is wealth but machinery? what are, even, religious organizations but machinery? Now almost every voice in England is accustomed to speak of these things as if they were precious ends in themselves, and therefore had some of the characters of perfection indisputably joined to them. I have before now noticed Mr. Roebuck's stock argument for proving the greatness and happiness of England as she is, and for quite stopping the mouths of all gainsayers. Mr. Roebuck is never weary of

reiterating this argument of his, so I do not know why I should be weary of noticing it. " May not every man in England say what he likes? "—Mr. Roebuck perpetually asks; and that, he thinks, is quite sufficient, and when every man may say what he likes, our aspirations ought to be satisfied. But the aspirations of culture, which is the study of perfection, are not satisfied, unless what men say, when they may say what they like, is worth saying—has good in it, and more good than bad. In the same way the " Times," replying to some foreign strictures on the dress, looks, and behavior of the English abroad, urges that the English ideal is that everyone should be free to do and to look just as he likes. But culture indefatigably tries, not to make what each raw person may like the rule by which he fashions himself; but to draw ever nearer to a sense of what is indeed beautiful, graceful, and becoming, and to get the raw person to like that.

And in the same way with respect to railroads and coal. Everyone must have observed the strange language current during the late discussions as to the possible failure of our supplies of coal. Our coal, thousands of people were saying, is the real basis of our national greatness; if our coal runs short, there is an end of the greatness of England. But what is greatness? —culture makes us ask. Greatness is a spiritual condition worthy to excite love, interest, and admiration; and the outward proof of possessing greatness is that we excite love, interest, and admiration. If England were swallowed up by the sea to-morrow, which of the two, a hundred years hence, would most excite the love, interest, and admiration of mankind —would most, therefore, show the evidences of having possessed greatness—the England of the last twenty years, or the England of Elizabeth, of a time of splendid spiritual effort, but when our coal, and our industrial operations depending on coal, were very little developed? Well, then, what an unsound habit of mind it must be which makes us talk of things like coal or iron as constituting the greatness of England, and how salutary a friend is culture, bent on seeing things as they are, and thus dissipating delusions of this kind and fixing standards of perfection that are real!

Wealth, again, that end to which our prodigious works for material advantage are directed—the commonest of common-

places tells us how men are always apt to regard wealth as a precious end in itself; and certainly they have never been so apt thus to regard it as they are in England at the present time. Never did people believe anything more firmly, than nine Englishmen out of ten at the present day believe that our greatness and welfare are proved by our being so very rich. Now, the use of culture is that it helps us, by means of its spiritual standard of perfection, to regard wealth as but machinery, and not only to say as a matter of words that we regard wealth as but machinery, but really to perceive and feel that it is so. If it were not for this purging effect wrought upon our minds by culture, the whole world, the future as well as the present, would inevitably belong to the Philistines. The people who believe most that our greatness and welfare are proved by our being very rich, and who most give their lives and thoughts to becoming rich, are just the very people whom we call Philistines. Culture says: "Consider these people, then, their way of life, their habits, their manners, the very tones of their voice; look at them attentively; observe the literature they read, the things which give them pleasure, the words which come forth out of their mouths, the thoughts which make the furniture of their minds: would any amount of wealth be worth having with the condition that one was to become just like these people by having it?" And thus culture begets a dissatisfaction which is of the highest possible value in stemming the common tide of men's thoughts in a wealthy and industrial community, and which saves the future, as one may hope, from being vulgarized, even if it cannot save the present.

Population, again, and bodily health and vigor, are things which are nowhere treated in such an unintelligent, misleading, exaggerated way as in England. Both are really machinery; yet how many people all around us do we see rest in them and fail to look beyond them! Why, one has heard people, fresh from reading certain articles of the "Times" on the registrar-general's returns of marriages and births in this country, who would talk of our large English families in quite a solemn strain, as if they had something in itself beautiful, elevating, and meritorious in them; as if the British Philistine would have only to present himself before the Great Judge with his twelve children, in order to be received among the sheep as a matter of right!

But bodily health and vigor, it may be said, are not to be classed with wealth and population as mere machinery; they have a more real and essential value. True; but only as they are more intimately connected with a perfect spiritual condition than wealth or population are. The moment we disjoin them from the idea of a perfect spiritual condition, and pursue them, as we do pursue them, for their own sake, and as ends in themselves, our worship of them becomes as mere worship of machinery, as our worship of wealth or population, and as unintelligent and vulgarizing a worship as that is. Everyone with anything like an adequate idea of human perfection has distinctly marked this subordination to higher and spiritual ends of the cultivation of bodily vigor and activity. "Bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things," says the author of the Epistle to Timothy. And the utilitarian Franklin says just as explicitly: "Eat and drink such an exact quantity as suits the constitution of thy body, in reference to the services of the mind." But the point of view of culture, keeping the mark of human perfection simply and broadly in view, and not assigning to this perfection, as religion or utilitarianism assign to it, a special and limited character—this point of view, I say, of culture is best given by these words of Epictetus: "It is a sign of *ἀφυΐα*," says he—that is, of a nature not finely tempered—"to give yourselves up to things which relate to the body; to make, for instance, a great fuss about exercise, a great fuss about eating, a great fuss about drinking, a great fuss about walking, a great fuss about riding. All these things ought to be done merely by the way: the formation of the spirit and character must be our real concern." This is admirable; and, indeed, the Greek word *εὐφυΐα*, a finely tempered nature, gives exactly the notion of perfection as culture brings us to perceive it: an harmonious perfection, a perfection in which the characters of beauty and intelligence are both present, which unites "the two noblest of things"—as Swift, who of one of the two, at any rate, had himself all too little, most happily calls them in his "Battle of the Books," "the two noblest of things, *sweetness and light*." The *εὐφυής* is the man who tends towards sweetness and light; the *ἀφυής*, on the other hand, is our Philistine. The immense spiritual significance of the Greeks is due to their having been inspired with this central and happy

idea of the essential character of human perfection; and Mr. Bright's misconception of culture, as a smattering of Greek and Latin, comes itself, after all, from this wonderful significance of the Greeks having affected the very machinery of our education, and is in itself a kind of homage to it.

In thus making sweetness and light to be characters of perfection, culture is of like spirit with poetry, follows one law with poetry. Far more than on our freedom, our population, and our industrialism, many amongst us rely upon our religious organizations to save us. I have called religion a yet more important manifestation of human nature than poetry, because it has worked on a broader scale for perfection, and with greater masses of men. But the idea of beauty and of a human nature perfect on all its sides, which is the dominant idea of poetry, is a true and invaluable idea, though it has not yet had the success that the idea of conquering the obvious faults of our animality, and of a human nature perfect on the moral side —which is the dominant idea of religion—has been enabled to have; and it is destined, adding to itself the religious idea of a devout energy, to transform and govern the other.

The best art and poetry of the Greeks, in which religion and poetry are one, in which the idea of beauty and of a human nature perfect on all sides adds to itself a religious and devout energy, and works in the strength of that, is on this account of such surpassing interest and instructiveness for us, though it was—as, having regard to the human race in general, and, indeed, having regard to the Greeks themselves, we must own—a premature attempt, an attempt which for success needed the moral and religious fibre in humanity to be more braced and developed than it had yet been. But Greece did not err in having the idea of beauty, harmony, and complete human perfection so present and paramount. It is impossible to have this idea too present and paramount; only, the moral fibre must be braced too. And we, because we have braced the moral fibre, are not on that account in the right way, if at the same time the idea of beauty, harmony, and complete human perfection is wanting or misapprehended amongst us; and evidently it is wanting or misapprehended at present. And when we rely as we do on our religious organizations, which in themselves do not and cannot give us this idea, and think we have done enough

if we make them spread and prevail, then, I say, we fall into our common fault of overvaluing machinery.

Nothing is more common than for people to confound the inward peace and satisfaction which follow the subduing of the obvious faults of our animality with what I may call absolute inward peace and satisfaction—the peace and satisfaction which are reached as we draw near to complete spiritual perfection, and not merely to moral perfection, or rather to relative moral perfection. No people in the world have done more and struggled more to attain this relative moral perfection than our English race has. For no people in the world has the command to resist the devil, to overcome the wicked one, in the nearest and most obvious sense of those words, had such a pressing force and reality. And we have had our reward, not only in the great worldly prosperity which our obedience to this command has brought us, but also, and far more, in great inward peace and satisfaction. But to me few things are more pathetic than to see people, on the strength of the inward peace and satisfaction which their rudimentary efforts towards perfection have brought them, employ, concerning their incomplete perfection and the religious organizations within which they have found it, language which properly applies only to complete perfection, and is a far-off echo of the human soul's prophecy of it. Religion itself, I need hardly say, supplies them in abundance with this grand language. And very freely do they use it; yet it is really the severest possible criticism of such an incomplete perfection as alone we have yet reached through our religious organizations.

The impulse of the English race towards moral development and self-conquest has nowhere no powerfully manifested itself as in Puritanism. Nowhere has Puritanism found so adequate an expression as in the religious organization of the Independents. The modern Independents have a newspaper, the "Nonconformist," written with great sincerity and ability. The motto, the standard, the profession of faith which this organ of theirs carries aloft, is: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant Religion." There are sweetness and light, and an ideal of complete harmonious human perfection! One need not go to culture and poetry to find language to judge it. Religion, with its instinct for perfection,

supplies language to judge it, language, too, which is in our mouths every day. "Finally, be of one mind, united in feeling," says St. Peter. There is an ideal which judges the Puritan ideal: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant Religion!" And religious organizations like this are what people believe in, rest in, would give their lives for! Such, I say, is the wonderful virtue of even the beginnings of perfection, of having conquered even the plain faults of our animality, that the religious organization which has helped us to do it can seem to us something precious, salutary, and to be propagated, even when it wears such a brand of imperfection on its forehead as this. And men have got such a habit of giving to the language of religion a special application, of making it a mere jargon, that for the condemnation which religion itself passes on the shortcomings of their religious organizations they have no ear; they are sure to cheat themselves and to explain this condemnation away. They can only be reached by the criticism which culture, like poetry, speaking a language not to be sophisticated, and resolutely testing these organizations by the ideal of a human perfection complete on all sides, applies to them.

But men of culture and poetry, it will be said, are again and again failing, and failing conspicuously, in the necessary first stage to an harmonious perfection, in the subduing of the great obvious faults of our animality, which it is the glory of these religious organizations to have helped us to subdue. True, they do often so fail. They have often been without the virtues as well as the faults of the Puritan; it has been one of their dangers that they so felt the Puritan's faults that they too much neglected the practice of his virtues. I will not, however, exculpate them at the Puritan's expense. They have often failed in morality, and morality is indispensable. And they have been punished for their failure, as the Puritan has been rewarded for his performance. They have been punished wherein they erred; but, thir ideal of beauty, of sweetness and light, and a human nature complete on all its sides, remains the true ideal of perfection still; just as the Puritan's ideal of perfection remains narrow and inadequate, although for what he did well he has been richly rewarded. Notwithstanding the mighty results of the Pilgrim Fathers' voyage, they and their standard of perfec-

tion are rightly judged when we figure to ourselves Shakespeare or Vergil—souls in whom sweetness and light, and all that in human nature is most humane, were eminent, accompanying them on their voyage, and think what intolerable company Shakespeare and Vergil would have found them! In the same way let us judge the religious organizations which we see all around us. Do not let us deny the good and the happiness which they have accomplished; but do not let us fail to see clearly that their idea of human perfection is narrow and inadequate, and that the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion will never bring humanity to its true goal. As I said with regard to wealth: Let us look at the life of those who live in and for it—so I say with regard to the religious organizations. Look at the life imaged in such a newspaper as the "Nonconformist"—a life of jealousy of the Establishment, disputes, tea-meetings, openings of chapels, sermons; and then think of it as an ideal of a human life completing itself on all sides, and aspiring with all its organs after sweetness, light, and perfection!

Another newspaper, representing, like the "Nonconformist," one of the religious organizations of this country, was a short time ago giving an account of the crowd at Epsom on the Derby day, and of all the vice and hideousness which were to be seen in that crowd; and then the writer turned suddenly round upon Professor Huxley, and asked him how he proposed to cure all this vice and hideousness without religion. I confess I felt disposed to ask the asker this question: And how do you propose to cure it with such a religion as yours? How is the ideal of a life so unlovely, so unattractive, so incomplete, so narrow, so far removed from a true and satisfying ideal of human perfection, as is the life of your religious organization as you yourself image it, to conquer and transform all this vice and hideousness? Indeed, the strongest plea for the study of perfection as pursued by culture, the clearest proof of the actual inadequacy of the idea of perfection held by the religious organizations—expressing, as I have said, the most wide-spread effort which the human race has yet made after perfection—is to be found in the state of our life and society with these in possession of it, and having been in possession of it I know not how many hundred years. We are all of us included in some religious organization or

other; we all call ourselves, in the sublime and aspiring language of religion which I have before noticed, children of God. Children of God;—it is an immense pretension!—and how are we to justify it? By the works which we do, and the words which we speak. And the work which we collective children of God do, our grand centre of life, our *city* which we have builded for us to dwell in, is London! London, with its unutterable external hideousness, and with its internal canker of *publice egestas, privatim opulentia*—to use the words which Sallust puts into Cato's mouth about Rome—unequalled in the world! The word, again, which we children of God speak, the voice which most hits our collective thought, the newspaper with the largest circulation in England, nay, with the largest circulation in the whole world, is the "Daily Telegraph!" I say that when our religious organizations—which I admit to express the most considerable effort after perfection that our race has yet made—land us in no better result than this, it is high time to examine carefully their idea of perfection, to see whether it does not leave out of account sides and forces of human nature which we might turn to great use; whether it would not be more operative if it were more complete. And I say that the English reliance on our religious organizations and on their ideas of human perfection just as they stand, is like our reliance on freedom, on muscular Christianity, on population, on coal, on wealth —mere belief in machinery, and unfruitful; and that it is wholesomely counteracted by culture, bent on seeing things as they are, and on drawing the human race onward to a more complete, a harmonious perfection.

Culture, however, shows its single-minded love of perfection, its desire simply to make reason and the will of God prevail, its freedom from fanaticism, by its attitude towards all this machinery, even while it insists that it is machinery. Fanatics, seeing the mischief men do themselves by their blind belief in some machinery or other—whether it is wealth and industrialism, or whether it is the cultivation of bodily strength and activity, or whether it is a political organization, or whether it is a religious organization—oppose with might and main the tendency to this or that political and religious organization, or to games and athletic exercises, or to wealth and industrialism, and try violently to stop it. But the flexibility which sweetness

and light give, and which is one of the rewards of culture pursued in good faith, enables a man to see that a tendency may be necessary, and even, as a preparation for something in the future, salutary, and yet that the generations of individuals who obey this tendency are sacrificed to it, that they fall short of the hope of perfection by following it; and that its mischiefs are to be criticised, lest it should take too firm a hold and last after it has served its purpose.

Mr. Gladstone well pointed out, in a speech at Paris—and others have pointed out the same thing—how necessary is the present great movement towards wealth and industrialism in order to lay broad foundations of material well-being for the society of the future. The worst of these justifications is, that they are generally addressed to the very people engaged, body and soul, in the movement in question; at all events, that they are always seized with the greatest avidity by these people, and taken by them as quite justifying their life; and that thus they tend to harden them in their sins. Now, culture admits the necessity of the movement towards fortune-making and exaggerated industrialism, readily allows that the future may derive benefit from it; but insists, at the same time, that the passing generations of industrialists—forming, for the most part, the stout main body of Philistinism—are sacrificed to it. In the same way, the result of all the games and sports which occupy the passing generation of boys and young men may be the establishment of a better and sounder physical type for the future to work with. Culture does not set itself against the games and sports; it congratulates the future, and hopes it will make a good use of its improved physical basis; but it points out that our passing generation of boys and young men is, meantime, sacrificed. Puritanism was perhaps necessary to develop the moral fibre of the English race, Nonconformity to break the yoke of ecclesiastical domination over men's minds and to prepare the way for freedom of thought in the distant future; still, culture points out that the harmonious perfection of generations of Puritans and Nonconformists has been, in consequence, sacrificed. Freedom of speech may be necessary for the society of the future, but the young lions of the " Daily Telegraph " in the meanwhile are sacrificed. A voice for every man in his coun-

try's government may be necessary for the society of the future, but meanwhile Mr. Beales and Mr. Bradlaugh are sacrificed.

Oxford, the Oxford of the past, has many faults: and she has heavily paid for them in defeat, in isolation, in want of hold upon the modern world. Yet we in Oxford, brought up amidst the beauty and sweetness of that beautiful place, have not failed to seize one truth: the truth that beauty and sweetness are essential characters of a complete human prefection. When I insist on this, I am all in the faith and tradition of Oxford. I say boldly that this our sentiment for beauty and sweetness, our sentiment against hideousness and rawness, has been at the bottom of our attachment to so many beaten causes, of our opposition to so many triumphant movements. And the sentiment is true, and has never been wholly defeated, and has shown its power even in its defeat. We have not won our political battles, we have not carried our main points, we have not stopped our adversaries' advance, we have not marched victoriously with the modern world; but we have told silently upon the mind of the country, we have prepared currents of feeling which sap our adversaries' position when it seems gained, we have kept up our own communications with the future. Look at the course of the great movement which shook Oxford to its centre some thirty years ago! It was directed, as anyone who reads Dr. Newman's "Apology" may see, against what in one word may be called "Liberalism." Liberalism prevailed; it was the appointed force to do the work of the hour; it was necessary, it was inevitable that it should prevail. The Oxford movement was broken, it failed; our wrecks are scattered on every shore:—

Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?

But what was it, this liberalism, as Dr. Newman saw it, and as it really broke the Oxford movement? It was the great middle-class liberalism, which had for the cardinal points of its belief the Reform Bill of 1832, and local self-government, in politics; in the social sphere, free trade, unrestricted competition, and the making of large industrial fortunes; in the religious sphere, the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion. I do not say that other and more intelligent forces than this were not opposed to the Oxford movement: but this

was the force which really beat it; this was the force which Dr. Newman felt himself fighting with; this was the force which till only the other day seemed to be the paramount force in this country, and to be in possession of the future; this was the force whose achievements fill Mr. Lowe with such inexpressible admiration, and whose rule he was so horror-struck to see threatened. And where is this great force of Philistinism now? It is thrust into the second rank, it is become a power of yesterday, it has lost the future. A new power has suddenly appeared, a power which it is impossible yet to judge fully, but which is certainly a wholly different force from middle-class liberalism; different in its cardinal points of belief, different in its tendencies in every sphere. It loves and admires neither the legislation of middle-class Parliaments, nor the local self-government of middle-class vestries, nor the unrestricted competition of middle-class industrialists, nor the Dissidence of middle-class Dissent and the Protestantism of middle-class Protestant religion. I am not now praising this new force, or saying that its own ideals are better; all I say is, that they are wholly different. And who will estimate how much the currents of feeling created by Dr. Newman's movements, the keen desire for beauty and sweetness which it nourished, the deep aversion it manifested to the hardness and vulgarity of middle-class liberalism, the strong light it turned on the hideous and grotesque illusions of middle-class Protestantism—who will estimate how much all these contributed to swell the tide of secret dissatisfaction which has mined the ground under the self-confident liberalism of the last thirty years, and has prepared the way for its sudden collapse and supersession? It is in this manner that the sentiment of Oxford for beauty and sweetness conquers, and in this manner long may it continue to conquer!

In this manner it works to the same end as culture, and there is plenty of work for it yet to do. I have said that the new and more democratic force which is now superseding our old middle-class liberalism cannot yet be rightly judged. It has its main tendencies still to form. We hear promises of its giving us administrative reform, law reform, reform of education, and I know not what; but those promises come rather from its advocates, wishing to make a good plea for it and to justify it for superseding middle-class liberalism, than from clear tendencies

which it has itself yet developed. But meanwhile it has plenty of well-intentioned friends against whom culture may with advantage continue to uphold steadily its ideal of human perfection; that this is an inward spiritual activity, having for its characters increased sweetness, increased light, increased life, increased sympathy. Mr. Bright, who has a foot in both worlds, the world of middle-class liberalism and the world of democracy, but who brings most of his ideas from the world of middle-class liberalism in which he was bred, always inclines to inculcate that faith in machinery to which, as we have seen, Englishmen are so prone, and which has been the bane of middle-class liberalism. He complains with a sorrowful indignation of people who "appear to have no proper estimate of the value of the franchise;" he leads his disciples to believe—what the Englishman is always too ready to believe—that the having a vote, like the having a large family, or a large business, or large muscles, has in itself some edifying and perfecting effect upon human nature. Or else he cries out to the democracy—"the men," as he calls them, "upon whose shoulders the greatness of England rests"—he cries out to them: "See what you have done! I look over this country and see the cities you have built, the railroads you have made, the manufactures you have produced, the cargoes which freight the ships of the greatest mercantile navy the world has ever seen! I see that you have converted by your labors what was once a wilderness, these islands, into a fruitful garden; I know that you have created this wealth, and are a nation whose name is a word of power throughout all the world." Why, this is just the very style of laudation with which Mr. Roebuck and Mr. Lowe debauch the minds of the middle classes, and make such Philistines of them. It is the same fashion of teaching a man to value himself not on what he is, not on his progress in sweetness and light, but on the number of railroads he has constructed, or the bigness of the tabernacle he has built. Only the middle classes are told they have done it all with their energy, self-reliance, and capital, and the democracy are told they have done it all with their hands and sinews. But teaching the democracy to put its trust in achievements of this kind is merely training them to be Philistines to take the place of the Philistines whom they are superseding; and they too, like the middle class, will be encouraged

to sit down at the banquet of the future without having on a wedding garment, and nothing excellent can then come from them. Those who know their besetting faults, those who have watched them and listened to them, or those who will read the instructive account recently given of them by one of themselves, the "Journeyman Engineer," will agree that the idea which culture sets before us of perfection—an increased spiritual activity, having for its characters increased sweetness, increased light, increased life, increased sympathy—is an idea which the new democracy needs far more than the idea of the blessedness of the franchise, or the wonderfulness of its own industrial performances.

Other well-meaning friends of this new power are for leading it, not in the old ruts of middle-class Philistinism, but in ways which are naturally alluring to the feet of democracy, though in this country they are novel and untried ways. I may call them the ways of Jacobinism. Violent indignation with the past, abstract systems of renovation applied wholesale, a new doctrine drawn up in black and white for elaborating down to the very smallest details a rational society for the future—these are the ways of Jacobinism. Mr. Frederic Harrison and other disciples of Comte—one of them, Mr. Congreve, is an old acquaintance of mine, and I am glad to have an opportunity of publicly expressing my respect for his talents and character—are among the friends of democracy who are for leading it in paths of this kind. Mr. Frederic Harrison is very hostile to culture, and from a natural enough motive; for culture is the eternal opponent of the two things which are the signal marks of Jacobinism—its fierceness, and its addiction to an abstract system. Culture is always assigning to system-makers and systems a smaller share in the bent of human destiny than their friends like. A current in people's minds sets towards new ideas; people are dissatisfied with their old narrow stock of Philistine ideas, Anglo-Saxon ideas, or any other; and some man, some Bentham or Comte, who has the real merit of having early and strongly felt and helped the new current, but who brings plenty of narrowness and mistakes of his own into his feeling and help of it, is credited with being the author of the whole current, the fit person to be intrusted with its regulation and to guide the human race.

The excellent German historian of the mythology of Rome, Preller, relating the introduction at Rome under the Tarquins of the worship of Apollo, the god of light, healing, and reconciliation, will have us observe that it was not so much the Tarquins who brought to Rome the new worship of Apollo, as a current in the mind of the Roman people which set powerfully at that time towards a new worship of this kind, and away from the old run of Latin and Sabine religious ideas. In a similar way culture directs our attention to the natural current there is in human affairs, and to its continual working, and will not let us rivet our faith upon any one man and his doings. It makes us see, not only his good side, but also how much in him was of necessity limited and transient; nay, it even feels a pleasure, a sense of an increased freedom and of an ampler future, in so doing.

I remember when I was under the influence of a mind to which I feel the greatest obligations, the mind of a man who was the very incarnation of sanity and clear sense, a man the most considerable, it seems to me, whom America has yet produced—Benjamin Franklin—I remember the relief with which, after long feeling the sway of Franklin's imperturbable common-sense, I came upon a project of his for a new version of the Book of Job, to replace the old version, the style of which, says Franklin, has become obsolete, and thence less agreeable. "I give," he continues, "a few verses, which may serve as a sample of the kind of version I would recommend." We all recollect the famous verse in our translation: "Then Satan answered the Lord and said: 'Doth Job fear God for nought?'" Franklin makes this: "Does Your Majesty imagine that Job's good conduct is the effect of mere personal attachment and affection?" I well remember how when first I read that, I drew a deep breath of relief, and said to myself: "After all, there is a stretch of humanity beyond Franklin's victorious good-sense!" So, after hearing Bentham cried loudly up as the renovator of modern society, and Bentham's mind and ideas proposed as the rulers of our future, I open the "Deontology." There I read: "While Xenophon was writing his history and Euclid teaching geometry, Socrates and Plato were talking nonsense under pretence of talking wisdom and morality. This morality of theirs consisted in words; this wisdom of theirs was

the denial of matters known to every man's experience." From the moment of reading that I am delivered from the bondage of Bentham! the fanaticism of his adherents can touch me no longer. I feel the inadequacy of his mind and ideas for supplying the rule of human society, for perfection.

Culture tends always thus to deal with the men of a system, of disciples, of a school; with men like Comte, or the late Mr. Buckle, or Mr. Mill. However much it may find to admire in these personages, or in some of them, it nevertheless remembers the text: "Be not ye called Rabbi!" and it soon passes on from any Rabbi. But Jacobinism loves a Rabbi; it does not want to pass on from its Rabbi in pursuit of a future and still unreached perfection; it wants its Rabbi and his ideas to stand for perfection, that they may with the more authority recast the world; and for Jacobinism, therefore, culture—eternally passing onward and seeking—is an impertinence and an offence. But culture, just because it resists this tendency of Jacobinism to impose on us a man with limitations and errors of his own along with the true ideas of which he is the organ, really does the world and Jacobinism itself a service.

So, too, Jacobinism, in its fierce hatred of the past and of those whom it makes liable for the sins of the past, cannot away with the inexhaustible indulgence proper to culture, the consideration of the circumstances, the severe judgment of actions joined to the merciful judgment of persons. "The man of culture is in politics," cries Mr. Frederic Harrison, "one of the poorest mortals alive!" Mr. Frederic Harrison wants to be doing business, and he complains that the man of culture stops him with a "turn for small fault-finding, love of selfish ease, and indecision in action." Of what use is culture, he asks, except for "a critic of new books or a professor of *belles-lettres*"? Why, it is of use because, in presence of the fierce exasperations which breathes, or rather, I may say, hisses, through the whole production in which Mr. Frederic Harrison asks that question, it reminds us that the perfection of human nature is sweetness and light. It is of use, because, like religion—that other effort after perfection—it testifies that, where bitter envying and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work.

The pursuit of perfection, then, is the pursuit of sweetness and light. He who works for sweetness and light, works to

make reason and the will of God prevail. He who works for machinery, he who works for hatred, works only for confusion. Culture looks beyond machinery, culture hates hatred; culture has one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light. It has one even yet greater!—the passion for making them prevail. It is not satisfied till we all come to a perfect man; it knows that the sweetness and light of a few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light. If I have not shrunk from saying that we must work for sweetness and light, so neither have I shrunk from saying that we must have a broad basis, must have sweetness and light for as many as possible. Again and again I have insisted how those are the happy moments of humanity, how those are the marking epochs of a people's life, how those are the flowering times for literature and art and all the creative power of genius, when there is a national glow of life and thought, when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by thought, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive. Only it must be real thought and real beauty; real sweetness and real light. Plenty of people will try to give the masses, as they call them, an intellectual food prepared and adapted in the way they think proper for the actual condition of the masses. The ordinary popular literature is an example of this way of working on the masses. Plenty of people will try to indoctrinate the masses with the set of ideas and judgments constituting the creed of their own profession or party. Our religious and political organizations give an example of this way of working on the masses. I condemn neither way; but culture works differently. It does not try to teach down to the level of inferior classes; it does not try to win them for this or that sect of its own, with ready-made judgments and watchwords. It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been taught and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely—nourished, and not bound by them.

This is the social idea; and the men of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other the best knowledge, the

best ideas of their time; who have labored to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the best knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of sweetness and light. Such a man was Abelard in the Middle Ages, in spite of all his imperfections; and thence the boundless emotion and enthusiasm which Abelard excited. Such were Lessing and Herder in Germany, at the end of the last century, and their services to Germany were in this way inestimably precious. Generations will pass, and literary monuments will accumulate, and works far more perfect than the works of Lessing and Herder will be produced in Germany; and yet the names of these two men will fill a German with a reverence and enthusiasm such as the names of the most gifted masters will hardly awaken. And why? Because they humanized knowledge; because they broadened the basis of life and intelligence; because they worked powerfully to diffuse sweetness and light, to make reason and the will of God prevail. With St. Augustine they said: "Let us not leave Thee alone to make in the secret of thy knowledge, as thou didst before the creation of the firmament, the division of light from darkness; let the children of thy spirit, placed in their firmament, make their light shine upon the earth, mark the division of night and day, and announce the revolution of the times; for the old order is passed, and the new arises; the night is spent, the day is come forth; and thou shalt crown the year with thy blessing, when thou shalt send forth laborers into thy harvest sown by other hands than theirs; when thou shalt send forth new laborers to new seed-times, whereof the harvest shall be not yet."

RACE AND LANGUAGE

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BY

EDWARD AUGUSTUS FREEMAN

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1823—1892

Edward Freeman was born at Harborne, Staffordshire, in 1823; was elected scholar of Trinity College, Oxford, in 1841, and filled the office of examiner in law and modern history from 1857 to 1864. He began his career as a writer on architecture, having published in 1846 a volume on "Church Restoration," and in 1849 a "History of Architecture." This was followed by the "Architectural Antiquities of Gower" in 1850, which reached a second edition in 1851, as did also the "Window Tracery of England," which had also been published in the year 1850. The "Architecture of Llandoff Cathedral" followed, and then the "History and Conquest of the Saracens" in 1856. The "History of Federal Government" appeared in 1863. The first volume of "The Norman Conquest of England"—which was merely introductory—appeared in 1867, and the second in 1868, both reaching a second edition in 1870, whilst the third volume was published in 1869, the fourth in 1872, and the fifth in 1876. The "Popular Old English History" was published in 1871, as well as "Historical Essays," collected from various reviews.

Freeman's "History of the Norman Conquest" may be ranked among the great works of the present century. With the fourth volume of his history Freeman ended what he termed his tale—the tale of the Norman Conquest of England. He had recorded the events which made it possible for a foreign prince to win and to keep England as his own. In the fifth volume he traced the results of the Conquest—the fusion of races—which was accomplished with little or no violence during the reign of William's son, Henry—and the important changes that then took place in the language and arts of the English people.

In 1872 he delivered the Rede Lecture at Cambridge, his subject being "The Unity of History." During his long and active literary career he wrote on a wide range of subjects. His essays alone form a list of one hundred and fifty-seven titles, treating of all sorts of subjects. They are marked by common-sense, intellectual breadth, a love of truth, great learning, and remarkable versatility. "On Race and Language" is classed as one of his finest essays.

RACE AND LANGUAGE

IT is no very great time since the readers of the English newspapers were, perhaps a little amused, perhaps a little startled, at the story of a deputation of Hungarian students going to Constantinople to present a sword of honor to an Ottoman general. The address and the answer enlarged on the ancient kindred of Turks and Magyars, on the long alienation of the dissevered kinsfolk, on the return of both in these later times to a remembrance of the ancient kindred and to the friendly feelings to which such kindred gave birth. The discourse has a strange sound when we remember the reigns of Sigismund and Wladislaus, when we think of the dark days of Nikopolis and Varna, when we think of Huniades encamped at the foot of Hæmus, and of Belgrade beating back Mahomet the Conqueror from her gates. The Magyar and the Ottoman embracing with the joy of reunited kinsfolk is a sight which certainly no man would have looked forward to in the fourteenth or fifteenth century. At an earlier time the ceremony might have seemed a degree less wonderful. If a man whose ideas are drawn wholly from the modern map should sit down to study the writings of Constantine Porphyrogennêtos, he would perhaps be startled at finding Turks and Franks spoken of as neighbors, at finding Turcia and Francia—we must not translate *Τουρκία* and *Φραγγία* by Turkey and France—spoken of as border-lands. A little study will perhaps show him that the change lies almost wholly in the names and not in the boundaries. The lands are there still, and the frontier between them has shifted much less than one might have looked for in nine hundred years. Nor has there been any great change in the population of the two countries. The Turks and the Franks of the Imperial geographer are there still, in the lands which he calls Turcia and Francia; only we no longer speak of them as Turks and Franks. The Turks of Constantine are Magyars;

the Franks of Constantine are Germans. The Magyar students may not unlikely have turned over the Imperial pages, and they may have seen how their forefathers stand described there. We can hardly fancy that the Ottoman general is likely to have given much time to lore of such a kind. Yet the Ottoman answer was as brimful of ethnological and antiquarian sympathy as the Magyar address. It is hardly to be believed that a Turk, left to himself, would by his own efforts have found out the primæval kindred between Turk and Magyar. He might remember that Magyar exiles had found a safe shelter on Ottoman territory; he might look deep enough into the politics of the present moment to see that the rule of Turk and Magyar alike is threatened by the growth of Slavonic national life. But the idea that Magyar and Turk owe each other any love or any duty, directly on the ground of primæval kindred, is certainly not likely to have presented itself to the untutored Ottoman mind. In short, it sounds, as some one said at the time, rather like the dream of a professor who has run wild with an ethnological craze, than like the serious thought of a practical man of any nation. Yet the Magyar students seem to have meant their address quite seriously. And the Turkish general, if he did not take it seriously, at least thought it wise to shape his answer as if he did. As a piece of practical politics, it sounds like Frederick Barbarossa threatening to avenge the defeat of Crassus upon Saladin, or like the French of the revolutionary wars making the Pope Pius of those days answerable for the wrongs of Vercingetorix. The thing sounds like comedy, almost like conscious comedy. But it is a kind of comedy which may become tragedy, if the idea from which it springs get so deeply rooted in men's minds as to lead to any practical consequences. As long as talk of this kind does not get beyond the world of hot-headed students, it may pass for a craze. It would be more than a craze, if it should be so widely taken up on either side that the statesmen on either side find it expedient to profess to take it up also.

To allege the real or supposed primeval kindred between Magyars and Ottomans as a ground for political action, or at least for political sympathy, in the affairs of the present moment, is an extreme case—some may be inclined to call it a *reductio ad absurdum*—of a whole range of doctrines and senti-

ments which have in modern days gained a great power over men's minds. They have gained so great a power that those who may regret their influence cannot afford to despise it. To make any practical inference from the primeval kindred of Magyar and Turk is indeed pushing the doctrine of race, and of sympathies arising from race, as far as it well can be pushed. Without plunging into any very deep mysteries, without committing ourselves to any dangerous theories in the darker regions of ethnological inquiry, we may perhaps be allowed at starting to doubt whether there is any real primeval kindred between the Ottoman and the Finnish Magyar. It is for those who have gone specially deep into the antiquities of the non-Aryan races to say whether there is or is not. At all events, as far as the great facts of history go, the kindred is of the vaguest and most shadowy kind. It comes to little more than the fact that Magyars and Ottomans are alike non-Aryan invaders who have made their way into Europe within recorded times, and that both have, rightly or wrongly, been called by the name of Turks. These do seem rather slender grounds on which to build up a fabric of national sympathy between two nations, when several centuries of living practical history all pull the other way. It is hard to believe that the kindred of Turk and Magyar was thought of when a Turkish pacha ruled at Buda. Doubtless Hungarian Protestants often deemed, and not unreasonably deemed, that the contemptuous toleration of the Moslem sultan was a lighter yoke than the persecution of the Catholic emperor. But it was hardly on grounds of primeval kindred that they made the choice. The ethnological dialogue held at Constantinople does indeed sound like ethnological theory run mad. But it is the very wildness of the thing which gives it its importance. The doctrine of race, and of sympathies springing from race, must have taken very firm hold indeed of men's minds before it could be carried out in a shape which we are tempted to call so grotesque as this.

The plain fact is that the new lines of scientific and historical inquiry which have been opened in modern times have had a distinct and deep effect upon the politics of the age. The fact may be estimated in many ways, but its existence as a fact cannot be denied. Not in a merely scientific or literary point of view, but in one strictly practical, the world is not the same

world as it was when men had not yet dreamed of the kindred between Sanscrit, Greek, and English, when it was looked on as something of a paradox to hint that there was a distinction between Celtic and Teutonic tongues and nations. Ethnological and philological researches—I do not forget the distinction between the two, but for the present I must group them together—have opened the way for new national sympathies, new national antipathies, such as would have been unintelligible a hundred years ago. A hundred years ago a man's political likes and dislikes seldom went beyond the range which was suggested by the place of his birth or immediate descent. Such birth or descent made him a member of this or that political community, a subject of this or that prince, a citizen—perhaps a subject—of this or that commonwealth. The political community of which he was a member had its traditional alliances and traditional enmities, and by those alliances and enmities the likes and dislikes of the members of that community were guided. But those traditional alliances and enmities were seldom determined by theories about language or race. The people of this or that place might be discontented under a foreign government; but, as a rule, they were discontented only if subjection to that foreign government brought with it personal oppression, or at least political degradation. Regard or disregard of some purely local privilege or local feeling went for more than the fact of a government being native or foreign. What we now call the sentiment of nationality did not go for much; what we call the sentiment of race went for nothing at all. Only a few men here and there would have understood the feelings which have led to those two great events of our own time, the political reunion of the German and Italian nations after their long political dissolution. Not a soul would have understood the feelings which have allowed Panslavism to be a great practical agent in the affairs of Europe, and which have made talk about "the Latin race," if not practical, at least possible. Least of all, would it have been possible to give any touch of political importance to what would have then seemed so wild a dream as a primeval kindred between Magyar and Ottoman.

That feelings such as these, and the practical consequences which have flowed from them, are distinctly due to scientific and historical teaching there can, I think, be no doubt. Religious

sympathy and purely national sympathy are both feelings of much simpler growth, which need no deep knowledge nor any special teaching. The cry which resounded through Christendom when the Holy City was taken by the Mussulmans, the cry which resounded through Islam when the same city was taken by the Christians, the spirit which armed England to support French Huguenots and which armed Spain to support French Leaguers, all spring from motives which lie on the surface. Nor need we seek for any explanation but such as lies on the surface for the natural wish for closer union which arose among Germans or Italians who found themselves parted off by purely dynastic arrangements from men who were their countrymen in everything else. Such a feeling has to strive with the counter-feeling which springs from local jealousies and local dislikes; but it is a perfectly simple feeling, which needs no subtle research either to arouse or to understand it. So, if we draw our illustrations from the events of our own time, there is nothing but what is perfectly simple in the feeling which calls Russia, as the most powerful of orthodox States, to the help of her orthodox brethren everywhere, and which calls the members of the orthodox Church everywhere to look to Russia as their protector. The feeling may have to strive against a crowd of purely political considerations, and by those purely political considerations it may be outweighed. But the feeling is in itself altogether simple and natural. So again, the people of Montenegro and of the neighboring lands in Herzegovina and by the *Bocche* of Cattaro feel themselves countrymen in every sense but the political accident which keeps them asunder. They are drawn together by a tie which everyone can understand, by the same tie which would draw together the people of three adjoining English counties, if any strange political action should part them asunder in like manner. The feeling here is that of nationality in the strictest sense, nationality in a purely local or geographical sense. It would exist all the same if Panslavism had never been heard of; it might exist though those who feel it had never heard of the Slavonic race at all. It is altogether another thing when we come to the doctrine of race, and of sympathies founded on race, in the wider sense. Here we have a feeling which professes to bind together, and which as a matter of fact has had a real effect in binding together, men whose

kindred to one another is not so obvious at first sight as the kindred of Germans, Italians, or Serbs who are kept asunder by nothing but a purely artificial political boundary. It is a feeling at whose bidding the call to union goes forth to men whose dwellings are geographically far apart, to men who may have had no direct dealings with one another for years or for ages, to men whose languages, though the scholar may at once see that they are closely akin, may not be so closely akin as to be mutually intelligible for common purposes. A hundred years back the Servian might have cried for help to the Russian on the ground of common orthodox faith; he would hardly have called for help on the ground of common Slavonic speech and origin. If he had done so, it would have been rather by way of grasping at any chance, however desperate or far-fetched, than as putting forward a serious and well understood claim which he might expect to find accepted and acted on by large masses of men. He might have received help, either out of genuine sympathy springing from community of faith or from the baser thought that he could be made use of as a convenient political tool. He would have got but little help purely on the ground of a community of blood and speech which had had no practical result for ages. When Russia in earlier days interfered between the Turk and his Christian subjects, there is no sign of any sympathy felt or possessed for Slavs as Slavs. Russia dealt with Montenegro, not, as far as one can see, out of any Slavonic brotherhood, but because an independent orthodox State at enmity with the Turk could not fail to be a useful ally. The earlier dealings of Russia with the subject nations were far more busy among the Greeks than among the Slavs. In fact, till quite lately, all the orthodox subjects of the Turk were in most European eyes looked on as alike Greeks. The orthodox Church has been commonly known as the Greek Church; and it has often been very hard to make people understand that the vast mass of the members of that so-called Greek Church are not Greek in any other sense. In truth we may doubt whether, till comparatively lately, the subject nations themselves were fully alive to the differences of race and speech among them. A man must in all times and places know whether he speaks the same language as another man; but he does not always go on to put his consciousness of difference into the shape of a sharply

drawn formula. Still less does he always make the difference the ground of any practical course of action. The Englishman in the first days of the Norman Conquest felt the hardships of foreign rule, and he knew that those hardships were owing to foreign rule. But he had not learned to put his sense of hardship into any formula about an oppressed nationality. So, when the policy of the Turk found that the subtle intellect of the Greek could be made use of as an instrument of dominion over the other subject nations, the Bulgarian felt the hardship of the state of things in which, as it was proverbially said, his body was in bondage to the Turk and his soul in bondage to the Greek. But we may suspect that this neatly turned proverb dates only from the awakening of a distinctly national Bulgarian feeling in modern times. The Turk was felt to be an intruder and an enemy, because his rule was that of an open oppressor belonging to another creed. The Greek, on the other hand, though his spiritual dominion brought undoubted practical evils with it, was not felt to be an intruder and an enemy in the same sense. His quicker intellect and superior refinement made him a model. The Bulgarian imitated the Greek tongue and Greek manners; he was willing in other lands to be himself looked on as a Greek. It is only in quite modern times, under the direct influence of the preaching of the doctrine of race, that a hard and fast line has been drawn between Greeks and Bulgarians. That doctrine has cut two ways. It has given both nations, Greek and Bulgarian alike, a renewed national life, national strength, national hopes, such as neither of them had felt for ages. In so doing, it has done one of the best and most hopeful works of the age. But in so doing, it has created one of the most dangerous of immediate political difficulties. In calling two nations into a renewed being, it has arrayed them in enmity against each other, and that in the face of a common enemy in whose presence all lesser differences and jealousies ought to be hushed into silence.

There is then a distinct doctrine of race, and of sympathies founded on race, distinct from the feeling of community of religion, and distinct from the feeling of nationality in the narrower sense. It is not so simple or easy a feeling as either of those two. It does not in the same way lie on the surface; it is not in the same way grounded on obvious facts which are plain

to every man's understanding. The doctrine of race is essentially an artificial doctrine, a learned doctrine. It is an inference from facts which the mass of mankind could never have found out for themselves; facts which, without a distinctly learned teaching, could never be brought home to them in any intelligible shape. Now what is the value of such a doctrine? Does it follow that, because it is confessedly artificial, because it springs, not from a spontaneous impulse, but from a learned teaching, it is therefore necessarily foolish, mischievous, perhaps unnatural? It may perhaps be safer to hold that, like many other doctrines, many other sentiments, it is neither universally good nor universally bad, neither inherently wise nor inherently foolish. It may be safer to hold that it may, like other doctrines and sentiments, have a range within which it may work for good, while in some other range it may work for evil. It may in short be a doctrine which is neither to be rashly accepted, nor rashly cast aside, but one which may need to be guided, regulated, modified, according to time, place, and circumstance. I am not now called on so much to estimate the practical good and evil of the doctrine as to work out what the doctrine itself is, and to try to explain some difficulties about it, but I must emphatically say that nothing can be more shallow, nothing more foolish, nothing more purely sentimental, than the talk of those who think that they can simply laugh down or shriek down any doctrine or sentiment which they themselves do not understand. A belief or a feeling which has a practical effect on the conduct of great masses of men, sometimes on the conduct of whole nations, may be very false and very mischievous; but it is in every case a great and serious fact, to be looked gravely in the face. Men who sit at their ease and think that all wisdom is confined to themselves and their own clique may think themselves vastly superior to the great emotions which stir our times, as they would doubtless have thought themselves vastly superior to the emotions which stirred the first Saracens or the first Crusaders. But the emotions are there all the same, and they do their work all the same. The most highly educated man in the most highly educated society cannot sneer them out of being.

But it is time to pass to the more strictly scientific aspect of the subject. The doctrine of race, in its popular form, is the

direct offspring of the study of scientific philology; and yet it is just now, in its popular form at least, somewhat under the ban of scientific philologers. There is nothing very wonderful in this. It is in fact the natural course of things which might almost have been reckoned on beforehand. When the popular mind gets hold of a truth it seldom gets hold of it with strict scientific precision. It commonly gets hold of one side of the truth; it puts forth that side of the truth only. It puts that side forth in a form which may not be in itself distorted or exaggerated, but which practically becomes distorted and exaggerated, because other sides of the same truth are not brought into their due relation with it. The popular idea thus takes a shape which is naturally offensive to men of strict precision, and which men of strict scientific precision have naturally, and from their own point of view quite rightly, risen up to rebuke. Yet it may often happen that, while the scientific statement is the only true one for scientific purposes, the popular version may also have a kind of practical truth for the somewhat rough and ready purposes of a popular version. In our present case scientific philologers are beginning to complain, with perfect truth and perfect justice from their own point of view, that the popular doctrine of race confounds race and language. They tell us, and they do right to tell us, that language is no certain test of race, that men who speak the same tongue are not therefore necessarily men of the same blood. And they tell us further, that from whatever quarter the alleged popular confusion came, it certainly did not come from any teaching of scientific philologers.

The truth of all this cannot be called in question. We have too many instances in recorded history of nations laying aside the use of one language and taking to the use of another, for anyone who cares for accuracy to set down language as any sure test of race. In fact, the studies of the philologer and those of the ethnologer strictly so called are quite distinct, and they deal with two wholly different sets of phenomena. The science of the ethnologer is strictly a physical science. He has to deal with purely physical phenomena; his business lies with the different varieties of the human body, and specially, to take that branch of his inquiries which most impresses the unlearned, with the various conformations of the human skull. His re-

searches differ in nothing from those of the zoölogist or the paleontologist, except that he has to deal with the physical phenomena of man, while they deal with the physical phenomena of other animals. He groups the different races of men, exactly as the others group the genera and species of living or extinct mammals or reptiles. The student of ethnology as a physical science may indeed strengthen his conclusions by evidence of other kinds, evidence from arms, ornaments, pottery, modes of burial. But all these are secondary; the primary ground of classification is the physical conformation of man himself. As to language, the ethnological method, left to itself, can find out nothing whatever. The science of the ethnologer then is primarily physical; it is historical only in that secondary sense in which paleontology, and geology itself, may fairly be called historical. It arranges the varieties of mankind according to a strictly physical classification; what the language of each variety may have been, it leaves to the professors of another branch of study to find out.

The science of the philologer, on the other hand, is strictly historical. There is doubtless a secondary sense in which purely philological science may be fairly called physical, just as there is a secondary sense in which pure ethnology may be called historical. That is to say, philology has to deal with physical phenomena, so far as it has to deal with the physical aspect of the sounds of which human language is made up. Its primary business, like the primary business of any other historical science, is to deal with phenomena which do not depend on physical laws, but which do depend on the human will. The science of language is, in this respect, like the science of human institutions or of human beliefs. Its subject-matter is not, like that of pure ethnology, what man is, but, like that of any other historical science, what man does. It is plain that no man's will can have any direct influence on the shape of his skull. I say no direct influence, because it is not for me to rule how far habits, places of abode, modes of life, a thousand things which do come under the control of the human will, may indirectly affect the physical conformation of a man himself or of his descendants. Some observers have made the remark that men of civilized nations who live in a degraded social state do actually approach to the physical type of inferior races. However

this may be, it is quite certain, that as no man can by taking thought add a cubit to his stature, so no man can by taking thought make his skull brachycephalic or dolichocephalic. But the language which a man speaks does depend upon his will; he can by taking thought make his speech Romance or Teutonic. No doubt he has in most cases practically no choice in the matter. The language which he speaks is practically determined for him by fashion, habit, early teaching, a crowd of things over which he has practically no control. But still the control is not physical and inevitable, as it is in the case of the shape of his skull. If we say that he cannot help speaking in a particular way; that is, that he cannot help speaking a particular language, this simply means that his circumstances are such that no other way of speaking presents itself to his mind. And in many cases, he has a real choice between two or more ways of speaking; that is, between two or more languages. Every word that a man speaks is the result of a real, though doubtless unconscious, act of his free will. We are apt to speak of gradual changes in language, as in institutions or anything else, as if they were the result of a physical law, acting upon beings who had no choice in the matter. Yet every change of the kind is simply the aggregate of various acts of the will on the part of all concerned. Every change in speech, every introduction of a new sound or a new word, was really the result of an act of the will of some one or other. The choice may have been unconscious; circumstances may have been such as practically to give him but one choice; still he did choose; he spoke in one way, when there was no physical hinderance to his speaking in another way, when there was no physical compulsion to speak at all. The Gauls need not have changed their own language for Latin; the change was not the result of a physical necessity, but of a number of acts of the will on the part of this and that Gaul. Moral causes directed their choice, and determined that Gaul should become a Latin-speaking land. But whether the skulls of the Gauls should be long or short, whether their hair should be black or yellow, those were points over which the Gauls themselves had no direct control whatever.

The study of men's skulls then is a study which is strictly physical, a study of facts over which the will of man has no direct control. The study of men's languages is strictly an

historical study, a study of facts over which the will of man has a direct control. It follows therefore from the very nature of the two studies that language cannot be an absolutely certain test of physical descent. A man cannot, under any circumstances, choose his own skull; he may, under some circumstances, choose his own language. He must keep the skull which has been given him by his parents; he cannot, by any process of taking thought, determine what kind of skull he will hand on to his own children. But he may give up the use of the language which he has learned from his parents, and he may determine what language he will teach to his children. The physical characteristics of a race are unchangeable, or are changed only by influences over which the race itself has no direct control. The language which the race speaks may be changed, either by a conscious act of the will or by that power of fashion which is in truth the aggregate of countless unconscious acts of the will. And, as the very nature of the case thus shows that language is no sure test of race, so the facts of recorded history equally prove the same truth. Both individuals and whole nations do in fact often exchange the language of their forefathers for some other language. A man settles in a foreign country. He learns the language of that country; sometimes he forgets the use of his own language. His children may perhaps speak both tongues; if they speak one tongue only, it will be the tongue of the country where they live. In a generation or two all trace of foreign origin will have passed away. Here then language is no test of race. If the great-grandchildren speak the language of their great-grandfathers, it will simply be as they may speak any other foreign language. Here are men who by speech belong to one nation, by actual descent to another. If they lose the physical characteristics of the race to which the original settler belonged, it will be due to intermarriage, to climate, to some cause altogether independent of language. Every nation will have some adopted children of this kind, more or fewer; men who belong to it by speech, but who do not belong to it by race. And what happens in the case of individuals happens in the case of whole nations. The pages of history are crowded with cases in which nations have cast aside the tongue of their forefathers, and have taken instead the tongue of some other people. Greek in the East,

Latin in the West, became the familiar speech of millions who had not a drop of Greek or Italian blood in their veins. The same has been the case in later times with Arabic, Persian, Spanish, German, English. Each of those tongues has become the familiar speech of vast regions where the mass of the people are not Arabian, Spanish, or English, otherwise than by adoption. The Briton of Cornwall has, slowly but in the end thoroughly, adopted the speech of England. In the American continent full-blooded Indians preside over commonwealths which speak the tongue of Cortes and Pizarro. In the lands to which all eyes are now turned, the Greek, who has been busily assimilating strangers ever since he first planted his colonies in Asia and Sicily, goes on busily assimilating his Albanian neighbors. And between renegades, janizaries, and mothers of all nations, the blood of many a Turk must be physically anything rather than Turkish. The inherent nature of the case, and the witness of recorded history, join together to prove that language is no certain test of race, and that the scientific philologers are doing good service to accuracy of expression and accuracy of thought by emphatically calling attention to the fact that language is no such test.

But, on the other hand, it is quite possible that the truth to which our attention is just now most fittingly called may, if put forth too broadly and without certain qualifications, lead to error quite as great as the error at which it is aimed. I do not suppose that anyone ever thought that language was, necessarily and in all cases, an absolute and certain test. If anybody does think so, he has put himself altogether out of court by shutting his eyes to the most manifest facts of the case. But there can be no doubt that many people have given too much importance to language as a test of race. Though they have not wholly forgotten the facts which tell the other way, they have not brought them out with enough prominence. But I can also believe that many people have written and spoken on the subject in a way which cannot be justified from a strictly scientific point of view, but which may have been fully justified from the point of view of the writers and speakers themselves. It may often happen that a way of speaking may not be scientifically accurate, but may yet be quite near enough to the truth for the purposes of the matter in hand. It may, for some practical

or even historical purpose, be really more true than the statement which is scientifically more exact. Language is no certain test of race; but if a man, struck by this wholesome warning, should run off into the belief that language and race have absolutely nothing to do with one another, he had better have gone without the warning. For in such a case the last error would be worse than the first. The natural instinct of mankind connects race and language. It does not assume that language is an infallible test of race; but it does assume that language and race have something to do with one another. It assumes, that though language is not an accurately scientific test of race, yet it is a rough and ready test which does for many practical purposes. To make something more of an exact definition, one might say, that though language is not a test of race, it is, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, a presumption of race; that though it is not a test of race, yet it is a test of something which, for many practical purposes, is the same as race.

Professor Max Müller warned us long ago that we must not speak of a Celtic skull. Mr. Sayce has more lately warned us that we must not infer from community of Aryan speech that there is any kindred in blood between this or that Englishman and this or that Hindoo. And both warnings are scientifically true. Yet anyone who begins his studies on these matters with Professor Müller's famous Oxford Essay will practically come to another way of looking at things. He will fill his mind with a vivid picture of the great Aryan family, as yet one, dwelling in one place, speaking one tongue, having already taken the first steps towards settled society, recognizing the domestic relations, possessing the first rudiments of government and religion, and calling all these first elements of culture by names of which traces still abide here and there among the many nations of the common stock. He will go on to draw pictures equally vivid of the several branches of the family parting off from the primeval home. One great branch he will see going to the southeast, to become the forefathers of the vast, yet isolated colony in the Asiatic lands of Persia and India. He watches the remaining mass sending off wave after wave, to become the forefathers of the nations of historical Europe. He traces out how each branch starts with its own share of the common stock—how the language, the creed, the

institutions, once common to all, grow up into different, yet kindred, shapes, among the many parted branches which grew up, each with an independent life and strength of its own. This is what our instructors set before us as the true origin of nations and their languages. And, in drawing out the picture, we cannot avoid, our teachers themselves do not avoid, the use of words which imply that the strictly family relation, the relation of community of blood, is at the root of the whole matter. We cannot help talking about the family and its branches, about parents, children, brothers, sisters, cousins. The nomenclature of natural kindred exactly fits the case; it fits it so exactly that no other nomenclature could enable us to set forth the case with any clearness. Yet we cannot be absolutely certain that there was any real community of blood in the whole story. We really know nothing of the origin of language or the origin of society. We may make a thousand ingenious guesses; but we cannot prove any of them. It may be that the group which came together, and which formed the primeval society which spoke the primeval Aryan tongue, were not brought together by community of blood, but by some other cause which threw them in one another's way. If we accept the Hebrew genealogies, they need not have had any community of blood nearer than common descent from Adam and Noah. That is, they need not have been all children of Shem, of Ham, or of Japheth; some children of Shem, some of Ham, and some of Japheth may have been led by some cause to settle together. Or if we believe in independent creations of men, or in the development of men out of mollusks, the whole of the original society need not have been descendants of the same man or the same mollusk. In short, there is no theory of the origin of man which requires us to believe that the primeval Aryans were a natural family; they may have been more like an accidental party of fellow-travellers. And if we accept them as a natural family, it does not follow that the various branches which grew into separate races and nations, speaking separate though kindred languages, were necessarily marked off by more immediate kindred. It may be that there is no nearer kindred in blood between this or that Persian, this or that Greek, this or that Teuton, than the general kindred of all Aryans. For, when this or that party marched off from the common home, it does follow that those

who marched off together were necessarily immediate brothers or cousins. The party which grew into Hindoos or Teutons may not have been made up exclusively of one set of near kinsfolk. Some of the children of the same parents or forefathers may have marched one way, while others marched another way, or stayed behind. We may, if we please, indulge our fancy by conceiving that there may actually be family distinctions older than distinctions of nation and race. It may be that the Gothic *Amali* and the Roman *Æmilii*—I throw out the idea as a mere illustration—were branches of a family which had taken a name before the division of Teuton and Italian. Some of the members of that family may have joined the band of which came the Goths, while other members joined the band of which came the Romans. There is no difference but the length of time to distinguish such a supposed case from the case of an English family, one branch of which settled in the seventeenth century at Boston in Massachusetts, while another branch stayed behind at Boston in Holland. Mr. Sayce says truly that the use of a kindred language does not prove that the Englishman and the Hindoo are really akin in race; for, as he adds, many Hindoos are men of non-Aryan race who have simply learned to speak tongues of Sanscrit origin. He might have gone on to say, with equal truth, that there is no positive certainty that there was any community in blood among the original Aryan group itself, and that if we admit such community of blood in the original Aryan group, it does not follow that there is any further special kindred between Hindoo and Hindoo or between Englishman and Englishman. The original group may not have been a family, but an artificial union. And if it was a family, those of its members who marched together east or west or north or south may have had no tie of kindred beyond the common cousinship of all.

Now the tendency of this kind of argument is to lead to something a good deal more startling than the doctrine that language is no certain test of race. Its tendency is to go on further, and to show that race is no certain test of community of blood. And this comes pretty nearly to saying that there is no such thing as race at all. For our whole conception of race starts from the idea of community of blood. If the word "race" does not mean community of blood, it is hard to see what it does

mean. Yet it is certain that there can be no positive proof of real community of blood, even among those groups of mankind which we instinctively speak of as families and races. It is not merely that the blood has been mingled in after-times; there is no positive proof that there was any community of blood in the beginning. No living Englishman can prove with absolute certainty that he comes in the male line of any of the Teutonic settlers in Britain in the fifth or sixth centuries. I say in the male line, because anyone who is descended from any English king can prove such descent, though he can prove it only through a long and complicated web of female successions. But we may be sure that in no other case can such a pedigree be proved by the kind of proof which lawyers would require to make out the title to an estate or a peerage. The actual forefathers of the modern Englishman may chance to have been, not true-born Angles or Saxons, but Britons, Scots, in later days Frenchmen, Flemings, men of any other nation who learned to speak English and took to themselves English names. But supposing that a man could make out such a pedigree, supposing that he could prove that he came in the male line of some follower of Hengest or Cerdic, he would be no nearer to proving original community of blood either in the particular Teutonic race or in the general Aryan family. If direct evidence is demanded, we must give up the whole doctrine of families and races, as far as we take language, manners, institutions, anything but physical conformation, as the distinguishing marks of races and families. That is to say, if we wish never to use any word of whose accuracy we cannot be perfectly certain, we must leave off speaking of races and families at all from any but the purely physical side. We must content ourselves with saying that certain groups of mankind have a common history, that they have languages, creeds, and institutions in common, but that we have no evidence whatever to show how they came to have languages, creeds, and institutions in common. We cannot say for certain what was the tie which brought the members of the original group together, any more than we can name the exact time and the exact place when and where they came together.

We may thus seem to be landed in a howling wilderness of scientific uncertainty. The result of pushing our inquiries so

far may seem to be to show that we really know nothing at all. But in truth the uncertainty is no greater than the uncertainty which attends all inquiries in the historical sciences. Though a historical fact may be recorded in the most trustworthy documents, though it may have happened in our own times, though we may have seen it happen with our own eyes, yet we cannot have the same certainty about it as the mathematician has about the proposition which he proves to absolute demonstration. We cannot have even that lower degree of certainty which the geologist has with regard to the order of succession between this and that stratum. For in all historical inquiries we are dealing with facts which themselves come within the control of human will and human caprice, and the evidence for which depends on the trustworthiness of human informants, who may either purposely deceive or unwittingly mislead. A man may lie; he may err. The triangles and the rocks can neither lie nor err. I may with my own eyes see a certain man do a certain act; he may tell me himself, or some one else may tell me, that he is the same man who did some other act; but as to his statement I cannot have absolute certainty, and no one but myself can have absolute certainty as to the statement which I make as to the facts which I saw with my own eyes. Historical evidence may range through every degree, from the barest likelihood to that undoubted moral certainty on which every man acts without hesitation in practical affairs. But it cannot get beyond this last standard. If, then, we are ever to use words like race, family, or even nation, to denote groups of mankind marked off by any kind of historical, as distinguished from physical, characteristics, we must be content to use those words, as we use many other words, without being able to prove that our use of them is accurate, as mathematicians judge of accuracy. I cannot be quite sure that William the Conqueror landed at Pevensey, though I have strong reasons for believing that he did so. And I have strong reasons for believing many facts about race and language about which I am much further from being quite sure than I am about William's landing at Pevensey. In short, in all these matters, we must be satisfied to let presumption very largely take the place of actual proof; and, if we only let presumption in, most of our difficulties at once fly away. Language is no certain test of race; but it is a pre-

sumption of race. Community of race, as we commonly understand race, is no certain proof of original community of blood; but it is a presumption of original community of blood. The presumption amounts to moral proof, if only we do not insist on proving such physical community of blood as would satisfy a genealogist. It amounts to moral proof, if all that we seek is to establish a relation in which the community of blood is the leading idea, and in which, where natural community of blood does not exist, its place is supplied by something which by a legal fiction is looked upon as its equivalent.

If, then, we do not ask for scientific, for what we may call physical, accuracy, but if we are satisfied with the kind of proof which is all that we can ever get in the historical sciences —if we are satisfied to speak in a way which is true for popular and practical purposes—then we may say that language has a great deal to do with race, as race is commonly understood, and that race has a great deal to do with community of blood. If we once admit the Roman doctrine of adoption, our whole course is clear. The natural family is the starting-point of everything; but we must give the natural family the power of artificially enlarging itself by admitting adoptive members. A group of mankind is thus formed, in which it does not follow that all the members have any natural community of blood, but in which community of blood is the starting-point, in which those who are connected by natural community of blood form the original body within whose circle the artificial members are admitted. A group of mankind thus formed is something quite different from a fortuitous concurrence of atoms. Three or four brothers by blood, with a fourth or fifth man whom they agree to look on as filling in everything the same place as a brother by blood, form a group which is quite unlike a union of four or five men, none of whom is bound by any tie of blood to any of the others. In the latter kind of union the notion of kindred does not come in at all. In the former kind the notion of kindred is the groundwork of everything; it determines the character of every relation and every action, even though the kindred between some members of the society and others may be owing to a legal fiction and not to natural descent. All that we know of the growth of tribes, races, nations, leads us to believe that they grew in this way. Natural kindred was the

groundwork, the leading and determining idea; but, by one of those legal fictions which have had such an influence on all institutions, adoption was in certain cases allowed to count as natural kindred.[1]

The usage of all languages shows that community of blood was the leading idea in forming the greater and smaller groups of mankind. Words like *φῦλον*, *γένος*, *gens, natio, kin,* all point to the natural family as the origin of all society. The family in the narrower sense, the children of one father in one house, grew into a more extended family, the *gens*. Such were the Alkmaiônidai, the Julii, or the Scyldingas, the real or artificial descendants of a real or supposed forefather. The nature of the *gens* has been set forth often enough. If it is a mistake to fancy that every Julius or Cornelius was the natural kinsman of every other Julius or Cornelius, it is equally a mistake to think that the *gens Julia* or *Cornelia* was in its origin a mere artificial association, into which the idea of natural kindred did not enter. It is indeed possible that really artificial *gentes,* groups of men of whom it might chance that none were natural kinsmen, were formed in later times after the model of the original *gentes.* Still such imitation would bear witness to the original conception of the *gens*. It would be the doctrine of adoption turned the other way; instead of a father adopting a son, a number of men would agree to adopt a common father. The family then grew into the *gens;* the union of *gentes* formed the State, the political community, which in its first form was commonly a tribe. Then came the nation, formed of a union of tribes. Kindred, real or artificial, is the one basis on which all society and all government have grown up.

Now it is plain, that as soon as we admit the doctrine of artificial kindred—that is, as soon as we allow the exercise of the law of adoption—physical purity of race is at an end. Adoption treats a man as if he were the son of a certain father; it cannot really make him the son of that father. If a brachycephalic father adopts a dolichocephalic son, the legal act cannot change the shape of the adopted son's skull. I will not undertake to

[1] I am here applying to this particular purpose a line of thought which both myself and others have often applied to other purposes. See, above all, Sir Henry Maine's lecture on "Kinship as the Basis of Society" in the lectures on the "Early History of Institutions"; I would refer also to my own lecture on "The State" in "Comparative Politics."

say whether, not indeed the rite of adoption, but the influences and circumstances which would spring from it, might not, in the course of generations, affect even the skull of the man who entered a certain *gens*, tribe, or nation by artificial adoption only. If by any chance the adopted son spoke a different language from the adopted father, the rite of adoption itself would not of itself change his language. But it would bring him under influences which would make him adopt the language of his new *gens* by a conscious act of the will, and which would make his children adopt it by the same unconscious act of the will by which each child adopts the language of his parents. The adopted son, still more the son of the adopted son, became, in speech, in feelings, in worship, in everything but physical descent, one with the *gens* into which he was adopted. He became one of that *gens* for all practical, political, historical purposes. It is only the physiologist who could deny his right to his new position. The nature of the process is well expressed by a phrase of our own law. When the nation—the word itself keeps about it the remembrance of birth as the groundwork of everything—adopts a new citizen, that is, a new child of the State, he is said to be naturalized. That is, a legal process puts him in the same position, and gives him the same rights, as a man who is a citizen and a son by birth. It is assumed that the rights of citizenship come by nature—that is, by birth. The stranger is admitted to them only by a kind of artificial birth; he is naturalized by law; his children are in a generation or two naturalized in fact. There is now no practical distinction between the Englishman whose forefathers landed with William, or even between the Englishman whose forefathers sought shelter from Alva or from Louis XIV, and the Englishman whose forefathers landed with Hengest. It is for the physiologist to say whether any difference can be traced in their several skulls; for all practical purposes, historical or political, all distinction between these several classes has passed away.

We may, in short, say that the law of adoption runs through everything, and that it may be practised on every scale. What adoption is at the hands of the family, naturalization is at the hands of the State. And the same process extends itself from adopted or naturalized individuals to large classes of men, indeed to whole nations. When the process takes place on this

scale, we may best call it assimilation. Thus Rome assimilated the continental nations of western Europe to that degree that, allowing for a few survivals here and there, not only Italy, but Gaul and Spain, became Roman. The people of those lands, admitted step by step to the Roman franchise, adopted the name and tongue of Romans. It must soon have been hard to distinguish the Roman colonist in Gaul or Spain from the native Gaul or Spaniard who had, as far as in him lay, put on the guise of a Roman. This process of assimilation has gone on everywhere and at all times. When two nations come in this way into close contact with one another, it depends on a crowd of circumstances which shall assimilate the other, or whether they shall remain distinct without assimilation either way. Sometimes the conquerors assimilate their subjects; sometimes they are assimilated by their subjects; sometimes conquerors and subjects remain distinct forever. When assimilation either way does take place, the direction which it takes in each particular case will depend, partly on their respective numbers, partly on their degrees of civilization. A small number of less civilized conquerors will easily be lost among a greater number of more civilized subjects, and that even though they give their name to the land and people which they conquer. The modern Frenchman represents, not the conquering Frank, but the conquered Gaul, or, as he called himself, the conquered Roman. The modern Bulgarian represents, not the Finnish conqueror, but the conquered Slav. The modern Russian represents, not the Scandinavian ruler, but the Slav who sent for the Scandinavian to rule over him. And so we might go on with endless other cases. The point is that the process of adoption, naturalization, assimilation, has gone on everywhere. No nation can boast of absolute purity of blood, though no doubt some nations come much nearer to it than others. When I speak of purity of blood, I leave out of sight the darker questions which I have already raised with regard to the groups of mankind in days before recorded history. I assume great groups like Celtic, Teutonic, Slavonic, as having what we may call a real corporate existence, however we may hold that that corporate existence began. My present point is that no existing nation is, in the physiologist's sense of purity, purely Celtic, Teutonic, Slavonic, or anything else. All races have assimilated a greater

or less amount of foreign elements. Taking this standard, one which comes more nearly within the range of our actual knowledge than the possibilities of unrecorded times, we may again say that, from the purely scientific or physiological point of view, not only is language no test of race, but that, at all events among the great nations of the world, there is no such thing as purity of race at all.

But, while we admit this truth, while we even insist upon it from the strictly scientific point of view, we must be allowed to look at it with different eyes from a more practical standing point. This is the standing point, whether of history which is the politics of the past, or of politics which is the history of the present. From this point of view, we may say unhesitatingly that there are such things as races and nations, and that to the grouping of those races and nations language is the best guide. We cannot undertake to define with any philosophical precision the exact distinction between race and race, between nation and nation. Nor can we undertake to define with the like precision in what way the distinctions between race and race, between nation and nation, began. But all analogy leads us to believe that tribes, nations, races, were all formed according to the original model of the family, the family which starts from the idea of the community of blood, but which allows artificial adoption to be its legal equivalent. In all cases of adoption, naturalization, assimilation, whether of individuals or of large classes of men, the adopted person or class is adopted into an existing community. Their adoption undoubtedly influences the community into which they are adopted. It at once destroys any claim on the part of that community to purity of blood, and it influences the adopting community in many ways, physical and moral. A family, a tribe, or a nation, which has largely recruited itself by adopted members, cannot be the same as one which has never practised adoption at all, but all whose members come of the original stock. But the influence which the adopting community exercises upon its adopted members is far greater than any influence which they exercise upon it. It cannot change their blood; it cannot give them new natural forefathers; but it may do everything short of this; it may make them, in speech, in feeling, in thought, and in habit, genuine

members of the community which has artificially made them its own. While there is not in any nation, in any race, any such thing as strict purity of blood, yet there is in each nation, in each race, a dominant element—or rather something more than an element—something which is the true essence of the race or nation, something which sets its standard and determines its character, something which draws to itself and assimilates to itself all other elements. It so works that all other elements are not coequal elements with itself, but mere infusions poured into an already existing body. Doubtless these infusions do in some measure influence the body which assimilates them; but the influence which they exercise is as nothing compared to the influence which they undergo. We may say that they modify the character of the body into which they are assimilated; they do not effect its personality. Thus, assuming the great groups of mankind as primary facts, the origin of which lies beyond our certain knowledge, we may speak of families and races, of the great Aryan family and of the races into which it parted, as groups which have a real, practical existence, as groups founded on the ruling primeval idea of kindred, even though in many cases the kindred may not be by natural descent, but only by law of adoption. The Celtic, Teutonic, Slavonic races of man are real living and abiding groups, the distinction between which we must accept among the primary facts of history. And they go on as living and abiding groups, even though we know that each of them has assimilated many adopted members, sometimes from other branches of the Aryan family, sometimes from races of men alien to the whole Aryan stock. These races which, in a strictly physiological point of view, have no existence at all, have a real existence from the more practical point of view of history and politics. The Bulgarian calls to the Russian for help, and the Russian answers to his call for help, on the ground of their being alike members of the one Slavonic race. It may be that, if we could trace out the actual pedigree of this or that Bulgarian, of this or that Russian, we might either find that there was no real kindred between them, or we might find that there was a real kindred, but a kindred which must be traced up to another stock than that of the Slav. In point of actual blood, instead of both be-

ing Slavs, it may be that one of them comes, it may be that both of them come of a stock which is not Slavonic or even Aryan. The Bulgarian may chance to be a Bulgarian in a truer sense than he thinks for; he may come of the blood of those original Finnish conquerors who gave the Bulgarian name to the Slavs among whom they were merged. And if this or that Bulgarian may chance to come of the stock of Finnish conquerors assimilated by their Slavonic subjects, this or that Russian may chance to come of the stock of Finnish subjects assimilated by their Slavonic conquerors. It may then so happen that the cry for help goes up, and is answered on a ground of kindred which in the eye of the physiologist has no existence. Or it may happen that the kindred is real in a way which neither the suppliant nor his helper thinks of. But in either case, for the practical purposes of human life, the plea is a good plea; the kindred on which it is founded is a real kindred. It is good by the law of adoption. It is good by the law the force of which we all admit whenever we count a man as an Englishman whose forefathers, two generations or twenty generations back, came to our shores as strangers. For all practical purposes, for all the purposes which guide men's actions, public or private, the Russian and the Bulgarian, kinsmen so long parted, perhaps in very truth no natural kinsmen at all, are members of the same race, bound together by the common sentiment of race. They belong to the same race, exactly as an Englishman whose forefathers came into Britain fourteen hundred years back, and an Englishman whose forefathers came only one or two hundred years back, are alike members of the same nation, bound together by a tie of common nationality.

And now, having ruled that races and nations, though largely formed by the working of an artificial law, are still real and living things, groups in which the idea of kindred is the idea around which everything has grown, how are we to define our races and our nations? How are we to mark them off one from the other? Bearing in mind the cautions and qualifications which have been already given, bearing in mind large classes of exceptions which will presently be spoken of, I say unhesitatingly that for practical purposes there is one test, and one only, and that that test is language. It is hardly needful

to show that races and nations cannot be defined by the merely political arrangements which group men under various governments. For some purposes of ordinary language, for some purposes of ordinary politics, we are tempted, sometimes driven, to take this standard. And in some parts of the world, in our own western Europe for instance, nations and governments do, in a rough way, fairly answer to one another. And, in any case, political divisions are not without their influence on the formation of national divisions, while national divisions ought to have the greatest influence on political divisions. That is to say, *prima facie* a nation and government should coincide. I say only *prima facie;* for this is assuredly no inflexible rule; there are often good reasons why it should be otherwise; only, whenever it is otherwise, there should be some good reason forthcoming. It might even be true that in no case did a government and a nation exactly coincide, and yet it would none the less be the rule that a government and a nation should coincide. That is to say, so far as a nation and a government coincide, we accept it as the natural state of things, and ask no question as to the cause. So far as they do not coincide, we mark the case as exceptional, by asking what is the cause. And by saying that a government and a nation should coincide we mean that, as far as possible, the boundaries of governments should be so laid out as to agree with the boundaries of nations. That is, we assume the nation as something already existing, something primary, to which the secondary arrangements of government should, as far as possible, conform. How then do we define the nation, which is, if there is no especial reason to the contrary, to fix the limits of a government? Primarily, I say, as a rule, but a rule subject to exceptions—as a *prima facie* standard, subject to special reasons to the contrary—we define the nation by language. We may at least apply the test negatively. It would be unsafe to rule that all speakers of the same language must have a common nationality; but we may safely say that where there is not community of language, there is no common nationality in the highest sense. It is true that without community of language there may be an artificial nationality, a nationality which may be good for all political purposes, and which may engender a common national feeling. Still this is

not quite the same thing as that fuller national unity which is felt where there is community of language. In fact mankind instinctively takes language as the badge of nationality. We so far take it as the badge, that we instinctively assume community of language as a nation as the rule, and we set down anything that departs from that rule as an exception. The first idea suggested by the word Frenchman or German or any other national name, is that he is a man who speaks French or German as his mother-tongue. We take for granted, in the absence of anything to make us think otherwise, that a Frenchman is a speaker of French, and that a speaker of French is a Frenchman. Where in any case it is otherwise, we mark that case as an exception, and we ask the special cause. Again, the rule is none the less the rule, nor the exceptions the exceptions, because the exceptions may easily outnumber the instances which conform to the rule. The rule is still the rule, because we take the instances which conform to it as a matter of course, while in every case which does not conform to it we ask for the explanation. All the larger countries of Europe provide us with exceptions; but we treat them all as exceptions. We do not ask why a native of France speaks French. But when a native of France speaks as his mother-tongue some other tongue than French, when French, or something which popularly passes for French, is spoken as his mother-tongue by someone who is not a native of France, we at once ask the reason. And the reason will be found in each case in some special historical cause which withdraws that case from the operation of the general law. A very good reason can be given why French, or something which popularly passes for French, is spoken in parts of Belgium and Switzerland, whose inhabitants are certainly not Frenchmen. But the reason has to be given, and it may fairly be asked.

In the like sort, if we turn to our own country, whenever within the bounds of Great Britain we find any tongue spoken other than English, we at once ask the reason, and we learn the special historic cause. In a part of France and a part of Great Britain we find tongues spoken which differ alike from English and from French, but which are strongly akin to one another. We find that these are the survivals of a group of tongues once common to Gaul and Britain, but which the set-

tlement of other nations, the introduction and the growth of other tongues, have brought down to the level of survivals. So again we find islands which both speech and geographical position seem to mark as French, but which are dependencies, and loyal dependencies, of the English crown. We soon learn the cause of the phenomenon which seems so strange. Those islands are the remains of a State and a people which adopted the French tongue, but which, while it remained one, did not become a part of the French State. That people brought England by force of arms under the rule of their own sovereigns. The greater part of that people were afterward conquered by France, and gradually became French in feeling as well as in language. But a remnant clave to their connection with the land which their forefathers had conquered, and that remnant, while keeping the French tongue, never became French in feeling. This last case, that of the Norman islands, is a specially instructive one. Normandy and England were politically connected, while language and geography pointed rather to a union between Normandy and France. In the case of continental Normandy, where the geographical tie was strongest, language and geography together could carry the day, and the continental Norman became a Frenchman. In the islands, where the geographical tie was less strong, political traditions and manifest interest carried the day against language and a weaker geographical tie. The insular Norman did not become a Frenchman. But neither did he become an Englishman. He alone remained Norman, keeping his own tongue and his own laws, but attached to the English crown by a tie at once of tradition and of advantage. Between States of the relative size of England and the Norman islands, the relation naturally becomes a relation of dependence on the part of the smaller members of the union. But it is well to remember that our forefathers never conquered the forefathers of the men of the Norman islands, but that their forefathers did once conquer ours.

These instances, and countless others, bear out the position that, while community of language is the most obvious sign of common nationality, while it is the main element, or something more than an element, in the formation of nationality, the rule is open to exceptions of all kinds, and that the influ-

ence of language is at all times liable to be overruled by other influences. But all the exceptions confirm the rule, because we specially remark those cases which contradict the rule, and we do not specially remark those cases which do not conform to it.

In the cases which we have just spoken of the growth of the nation as marked out by language, and the growth of the exceptions to the rule of language, have both come through the gradual, unconscious working of historical causes. Union under the same government, or separation under separate governments, have been among the foremost of those historical causes. The French nation consists of the people of all that extent of continuous territory which has been brought under the rule of the French kings. But the working of the cause has been gradual and unconscious. There was no moment when anyone deliberately proposed to form a French nation by joining together all the separate duchies and counties which spoke the French tongue. Since the French nation has been formed, men have proposed to annex this or that land on the ground that its people spoke the French tongue, or perhaps only some tongue akin to the French tongue. But the formation of the French nation itself was the work of historical causes, the work doubtless of a settled policy acting through many generations, but not the work of any conscious theory about races and languages. It is a special mark of our time, a special mark of the influence which doctrines about race and language have had on men's minds, that we have seen great nations united by processes in which theories of race and language really have had much to do with bringing about their union. If statesmen have not been themselves moved by such theories, they have at least found that it suited their purpose to make use of such theories as a means of working on the minds of others. In the reunion of the severed German and Italian nations the conscious feeling of nationality, and the acceptance of a common language as the outward badge of nationality, had no small share. Poets sang of language as the badge of national union; statesmen made it the badge, so far as political considerations did not lead them to do anything else. The revived kingdom of Italy is very far from taking in all the speakers of the Italian tongue. Lugano, Trent,

Aquileia—to take places which are clearly Italian, and not to bring in places of more doubtful nationality, like the cities of Istria and Dalmatia—form no part of the Italian political body, and Corsica is not under the same rule as the other two great neighboring islands. But the fact that all these places do not belong to the Italian body at once suggests the twofold question, why they do not belong to it, and whether they ought not to belong to it. History easily answers the first question; it may perhaps also answer the second question in a way which will say Yes as regards one place and No as regards another. Ticino must not lose her higher freedom; Trieste must remain the needful mouth for southern Germany; Dalmatia must not be cut off from the Slavonic mainland; Corsica would seem to have sacrificed national feeling to personal hero-worship. But it is certainly hard to see why Trent and Aquileia should be kept apart from the Italian body. On the other hand, the revived Italian kingdom contains very little which is not Italian in speech. It is perhaps by a somewhat elastic view of language that the dialect of Piedmont and the dialect of Sicily are classed under one head; still, as a matter of fact, they have a single classical standard, and they are universally accepted as varieties of the same tongue. But it is only in a few Alpine valleys that languages are spoken which, whether Romance or Teutonic, are in any case not Italian. The reunion of Italy, in short, took in all that was Italian, save when some political cause hindered the rule of language from being followed. Of anything not Italian by speech so little has been taken in that the non-Italian parts of Italy, Burgundian Aosta and the Seven German Communes—if these last still keep their Teutonic language—fall under the rule that there are some things too small for laws to pay heed to.

But it must not be forgotten that all this simply means that in the lands of which we have just been speaking the process of adoption has been carried out on the largest scale. Nations, with languages as their rough practical test, have been formed; but they have been formed with very little regard to physical purity of blood. In short, throughout western Europe assimilation has been the rule. That is to say, in any of the great divisions of Western Europe, though the land may have been settled and conquered over and over again, yet the

mass of the people of the land have been drawn to some one national type. Either some one among the races inhabiting the land has taught the others to put on its likeness, or else a new national type has arisen which has elements drawn from several of those races. Thus the modern Frenchman may be defined as produced by the union of blood which is mainly Celtic with a speech which is mainly Latin, and with an historical polity which is mainly Teutonic. That is, he is neither Gaul, Roman, nor Frank, but a fourth type which has drawn important elements from all three. Within modern France this new national type has so far assimilated all others as to make everything else merely exceptional. The Fleming of one corner, the Basque of another, even the far more important Breton of a third corner, have all in this way become mere exceptions to the general type of the country. If we pass into our own islands we shall find that the same process has been at work. If we look to Great Britain only, we shall find that, though the means have not been the same, yet the end has been gained hardly less thoroughly than in France. For all real political purposes, for everything which concerns a nation in the face of other nations, Great Britain is as thoroughly united as France is. Englishmen, Scotchmen, Welshmen, feel themselves one people in the general affairs of the world. A secession of Scotland or Wales is as unlikely as a secession of Normandy or Languedoc. The part of the island which is not thoroughly assimilated in language, that part which still speaks Welsh or Gaelic, is larger in proportion than the non-French part of modern France. But however much either the northern or the western Briton may, in a fit of antiquarian politics, declaim against the Saxon, for all practical political purposes he and the Saxon are one. The distinction between the southern and the northern English—for the men of Lothian and Fife must allow me to call them by this last name—is, speaking politically and without ethnological or linguistic precision, much as if France and Aquitaine had been two kingdoms united on equal terms, instead of Aquitaine being merged in France. When we cross into Ireland, we indeed find another state of things, and one which comes nearer to some of the phenomena which we shall come to in other parts of the world. Ireland is, most unhappily, not so firmly

united to Great Britain as the different parts of Great Britain are to one another. Still even here the division arises quite as much from geographical and historical causes as from distinctions of race strictly so called. If Ireland had had no wrongs, still two great islands can never be so thoroughly united as a continuous territory can be. On the other hand, in point of language, the discontented part of the United Kingdom is much less strongly marked off than that fraction of the contented part which is not thoroughly assimilated. Irish is certainly not the language of Ireland in at all the same degree in which Welsh is the language of Wales. The Saxon has commonly to be denounced in the Saxon tongue.

In some other parts of Western Europe, as in the Spanish and Scandinavian peninsulas, the coincidence of language and nationality is stronger than it is in France, Britain, or even Italy. No one speaks Spanish except in Spain or in the colonies of Spain. And within Spain the proportion of those who do not speak Spanish, namely the Basque remnant, is smaller than the non-assimilated element in Britain and France. Here two things are to be marked: First, the modern Spanish nation has been formed, like the French, by a great process of assimilation; secondly, the actual national arrangements of the Spanish peninsula are wholly due to historical causes, we might almost say historical accidents, and those of very recent date. Spain and Portugal are separate kingdoms, and we look on their inhabitants as forming separate nations. But this is simply because a queen of Castile in the fifteenth century married a king of Aragon. Had Isabella married a king of Portugal we should now talk of Spain and Aragon as we now talk of Spain and Portugal, and we should count Portugal for part of Spain. In language, in history, in everything else, Aragon was really more distinct from Castile than Portugal was. The king of Castile was already spoken of as king of Spain, and Portugal would have merged in the Spanish kingdom at last as easily as Aragon did. In Scandinavia, on the other hand, there must have been less assimilation than anywhere else. In the present kingdoms of Norway and Sweden there must be a nearer approach to actual purity of blood than in any other part of Europe. One cannot fancy that much Finnish blood

has been assimilated, and there have been no conquests or settlements later than that of the Northmen themselves.

When we pass into central Europe we shall find a somewhat different state of things. The distinctions of race seem to be more lasting. While the national unity of the German Empire is greater than that of either France or Great Britain, it has not only subjects of other languages, but actually discontented subjects, in three corners, on its French, its Danish, and its Polish frontiers. We ask the reason, and it will be at once answered that the discontent of all three is the result of recent conquest, in two cases of very recent conquest indeed. But this is one of the very points to be marked; the strong national unity of the German Empire has been largely the result of assimilation; and these three parts, where recent conquest has not yet been followed by assimilation, are chiefly important because, in all three cases, the discontented territory is geographically continuous with a territory of its own speech outside the Empire. This does not prove that assimilation can never take place; but it will undoubtedly make the process longer and harder.

So again, wherever German-speaking people dwell outside the bounds of the revived German State, as well as when that revived German State contains other than German-speaking people, we ask the reason and we can find it. Political reasons forbade the immediate annexation of Austria, Tyrol, and Salzburg. Combined political and geographical reasons, and, if we look a little deeper, ethnological reasons too, forbade the annexation of Courland, Livonia, and Esthonia. Some reason or other will, it may be hoped, always be found to hinder the annexation of lands which, like Zürich and Berne, have reached a higher political level. Outlying brethren in Transylvania or at Saratof again come under the rule "*De minimis non curat lex.*" In all these cases the rule that nationality and language should go together yields to unavoidable circumstances. But, on the other hand, where French or Danish or Slavonic or Lithuanian is spoken within the bounds of the new empire, the principle that language is the badge of nationality, that without community of language nationality is imperfect, shows itself in another shape. One main object of modern policy is to bring these exceptional districts under the general

rule by spreading the German language in them. Everywhere, in short, wherever a power is supposed to be founded on nationality, the common feeling of mankind instinctively takes language as the test of nationality. We assume language as the test of a nation, without going into any minute questions as to the physical purity of blood in that nation. A continuous territory, living under the same government and speaking the same tongue, forms a nation for all practical purposes. If some of its inhabitants do not belong to the original stock by blood, they at least belong to it by adoption.

The question may now fairly be asked, What is the case in those parts of the world where people who are confessedly of different races and languages inhabit a continuous territory and live under the same government? How do we define nationality in such cases as these? The answer will be very different in different cases, according to the means by which the different national elements in such a territory have been brought together. They may form what I have already called an artificial nation, united by an act of its own free will. Or it may be simply a case where distinct nations, distinct in everything which can be looked on as forming a nation, except the possession of an independent government, are brought together, by whatever causes, under a common ruler. The former case is very distinctly an exception which proves the rule, and the latter is, though in quite another way, an exception which proves the rule also. Both cases may need somewhat more in the way of definition. We will begin with the first, the case of a nation which has been formed out of elements which differ in language, but which still have been brought together so as to form an artificial nation. In the growth of the chief nations of western Europe the principle which was consciously or unconsciously followed has been that the nation should be marked out by language, and the use of any tongue other than the dominant tongue of the nation should be at least exceptional. But there is one nation in Europe, one which has a full right to be called a nation in a political sense, which has been formed on the directly opposite principle. The Swiss Confederation has been formed by the union of certain detached fragments of the German, Italian, and Burgundian nations. It may indeed be said that the process has been in some

sort a process of adoption, that the Italian and Burgundian elements have been incorporated into an already existing German body; that, as those elements were once subjects or dependents or protected allies, the case is one of clients or freedmen who have been admitted to the full privileges of the *gens*. This is undoubtedly true, and it is equally true of a large part of the German element itself. Throughout the Confederation allies and subjects have been raised to the rank of confederates. But the former position of the component elements does not matter for our purpose. As a matter of fact, the foreign dependencies have all been admitted into the Confederation on equal terms. German is undoubtedly the language of a great majority of the Confederation; but the two recognized Romance languages are each the speech, not of a mere fragment or survival, like Welsh in Britain or Breton in France, but of a large minority forming a visible element in the general body. The three languages are all of them alike recognized as national languages, though, as if to keep up the universal rule that there should be some exceptions to all rules, a fourth language still lives on within the bounds of the Confederation, which is not admitted to the rights of the other three, but is left in the state of a fragment or a survival.[2] Is such an artificial body as this to be called a nation? It is plainly not a nation by blood or by speech. It can hardly be called a nation by adoption. For, if we choose to say that the three elements have all agreed to adopt one another as brethren, yet it has been adoption without assimilation. Yet surely the Swiss Confederation is a nation. It is not a mere power, in which various nations are brought together, whether willingly or unwillingly, under a common ruler, but without any further tie of union. For all political purposes the Swiss Confederation is a nation, a nation capable of as strong and true national feeling as any other nation. Yet it is a nation purely artificial, one in no way defined by blood or speech. It thus proves the rule in two ways. We at once feel that this arti-

[2] While the Swiss Confederation recognizes German, French, and Italian as all alike national languages, the independent Romance language, which is still used in some parts of the Canton of Graubünden, that which is known specially as Romansch, is not recognized. It is left in the same position in which Welsh and Gaelic are left in Great Britain, in which Basque, Breton, Provençal, Walloon, and Flemish are left within the borders of that French kingdom which has grown so as to take them all in.

ficially formed nation, which has no common language, but each of whose elements speaks a language common to itself with some other nation, is something different from those nations which are defined by a universal or at least a predominant language. We mark it as an exception, as something different from other cases. And when we see how nearly this artificial nation comes, in every point but that of language, to the likeness of those nations which are defined by language, we see that it is a nation defined by language which sets the standard, and after the model of which the artificial nation forms itself. The case of the Swiss Confederation and its claim to rank as a nation would be like the case of those *gentes*, if any such there were, which did not spring even from the expansion of an original family, but which were artificially formed in imitation of those which did, and which, instead of a real or traditional forefather, chose for themselves an adopted one.

In the Swiss Confederation, then, we have a case of a nation formed by an artificial process, but which still is undoubtedly a nation in the face of other nations. We now come to the other class, in which nationality and language keep the connection which they have elsewhere, but in which nations do not even in the roughest way answer to governments. We have only to go into the Eastern lands of Europe to find a state of things in which the notion of nationality, as marked out by language and national feeling, has altogether parted company from the notion of political government. It must be remembered that this state of things is not confined to the nations which are or have lately been under the yoke of the Turk. It extends also to the nations or fragments of nations which make up the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. In all the lands held by these two powers we come across phenomena of geography, race, and language, which stand out in marked contrast with anything to which we are used in western Europe. We may perhaps better understand what those phenomena are if we suppose a state of things which sounds absurd in the West, but which has its exact parallel in many parts of the East. Let us suppose that in a journey through England we came successively to districts, towns, or villages, where we found, one after another, first, Britons speaking Welsh; then Romans speaking Latin; then Saxons or Angles speaking an older

form of our own tongue; then Scandinavians speaking Danish; then Normans speaking Old-French; lastly, perhaps a settlement of Flemings, Huguenots, or Palatines, still remaining a distinct people and speaking their own tongue. Or let us suppose a journey through northern France, in which we found at different stages, the original Gaul, the Roman, the Frank, the Saxon of Bayeux, the Dane of Coutances, each remaining a distinct people, each of them keeping the tongue which they first brought with them into the land. Let us suppose further that, in many of these cases, a religious distinction was added to a national distinction. Let us conceive one village Roman Catholic, another Anglican, others Nonconformist of various types, even if we do not call up any remnants of the worshippers of Jupiter or of Woden. All this seems absurd in any Western country, and absurd enough it is. But the absurdity of the West is the living reality of the East. There we may still find all the chief races which have ever occupied the country, still remaining distinct, still keeping separate tongues, and those for the most part, their own original tongues. Within the present and late European dominions of the Turk, the original races, those whom we find there at the first beginnings of history, are all there still, and two of them keep their original tongues. They form three distinct nations. First of all there are the Greeks. We have not here to deal with them as the representatives of that branch of the Roman Empire which adopted their speech, but simply as one of the original elements in the population of the Eastern peninsula. Known almost down to our own day by their historical name of Romans, they have now fallen back on the name of Hellênes. And to that name they have a perfectly good claim. If the modern Greeks are not all true Hellênes, they are an aggregate of adopted Hellênes gathered round and assimilated to a true Hellenic kernel. Here we see the oldest recorded inhabitants of a large part of the land abiding, and abiding in a very different case from the remnants of the Celt and the Iberian in Western Europe. The Greeks are no survival of a nation; they are a true and living nation, a nation whose importance is quite out of its proportion to its extent in mere numbers. They still abide, the predominant race in their own ancient and again independent land, the predominant race in

those provinces of the continental Turkish dominion which formed part of their ancient land, the predominant race through all the shores and islands of the Ægæan and of part of the Euxine also. In near neighborhood to the Greeks still live another race of equal antiquity, the Skipetar or Albanians. These, as I believe is no longer doubted, represent the ancient Illyrians. The exact degree of their ethnical kindred with the Greeks is a scientific question which need not here be considered; but the facts that they are more largely intermingled with the Greeks than any of the other neighboring nations, that they show a special power of identifying themselves with the Greeks, a power, so to speak, of becoming Greeks and making part of the artificial Greek nation, are matters of practical history. It must never be forgotten, that among the worthies of the Greek war of independence, some of the noblest were not of Hellenic but Albanian blood. The orthodox Albanian easily turns into a Greek; and the Mahometan Albanian is something which is broadly distinguished from a Turk. He has, as he well may have, a strong national feeling, and that national feeling has sometimes got the better of religious divisions. If Albania is among the most backward parts of the peninsula, still it is, by all accounts, the part where there is most hope of men of different religions joining together against the common enemy.

Here then are two ancient races, the Greeks and another race, not indeed so advanced, so important, or so widely spread, but a race which equally keeps a real national being. There is also a third ancient race which survives as a distinct people, though they have for ages adopted a foreign language. These are the Vlachs or Roumans, the surviving representatives of the great race, call it Thracian or any other, which at the beginning of history held the great inland mass of the Eastern peninsula, with the Illyrians to the west of them and the Greeks to the south. Everyone knows that in the modern principality of Roumania and in the adjoining parts of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, there is to be seen that phenomenon so unique in the East, a people who not only, as the Greeks did till lately, still keep the Roman name, but who speak neither Greek nor Turkish, neither Slav nor Skipetar, but a dialect of Latin, a tongue akin, not to the tongues of any of their neigh-

bors, but to the tongues of Gaul, Italy, and Spain. And anyone who has given any real attention to this matter knows that the same race is to be found, scattered here and there, if in some parts only as wandering shepherds, in the Slavonic, Albanian, and Greek lands south of the Danube. The assumption has commonly been that this outlying Romance people owe their Romance character to the Roman colonization of Dacia under Trajan. In this view, the modern Roumans would be the descendants of Trajan's colonists and of Dacians who had learned of them to adopt the speech and manners of Rome. But when we remember that Dacia was the first Roman province to be given up—that the modern Roumania was for ages the highway of every barbarian tribe on its way from the East to the West—that the land has been conquered and settled and forsaken over and over again—it would be passing strange if this should be the one land, and its people the one race, to keep the Latin tongue when it has been forgotten in all the neighboring countries. In fact, this idea has been completely dispersed by modern research. The establishment of the Roumans in Dacia is of comparatively recent date, beginning only in the thirteenth century. The Roumans of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania, are isolated from the scattered Rouman remnant on Pindos and elsewhere. They represent that part of the inhabitants of the peninsula which became Latin, while the Greeks remained Greek, and the Illyrians remained barbarian. Their lands, Mœsia, Thrace specially so called, and Dacia, were added to the empire at various times from Augustus to Trajan. That they should gradually adopt the Latin language is in no sort wonderful. Their position with regard to Rome was exactly the same as that of Gaul and Spain. Where Greek civilization had been firmly established, Latin could nowhere displace it. Where Greek civilization was unknown, Latin overcame the barbarian tongue. It would naturally do so in this part of the East exactly as it did in the West.[8]

Here then we have in the southeastern peninsula three nations which have all lived on to all appearances from the very beginnings of European history, three distinct nations, speak-

[8] On Rouman history I have followed Roesler's "Romänische Studien" and Jirecek's "Geschichte der Bulgaren."

ing three distinct languages. We have nothing answering to this in the West. It needs no proof that the speakers of Celtic and Basque in Gaul and in Spain do not hold the same position in western Europe which the Greeks, Albanians, and Roumans do in eastern Europe. In the East the most ancient inhabitants of the land are still there, not as scraps or survivals, not as fragments of nations lingering on in corners, but as nations in the strictest sense, nations whose national being forms an element in every modern and political question. They all have their memories, their grievances, and their hopes; and their memories, their grievances, and their hopes are all of a practical and political kind. Highlanders, Welshmen, Bretons, French Basques, whatever we say of the Spanish brethren, have doubtless memories, but they have hardly political grievances or hopes. Ireland may have political grievances; it certainly has political hopes; but they are not exactly of the same kind as the grievances or hopes of the Greek, the Albanian, and the Rouman. Let Home Rule succeed to the extent of setting up an independent king and parliament of Ireland, yet the language and civilization of that king and parliament would still be English. Ireland would form an English State, politically hostile, it may be, to Great Britain, but still an English State. No Greek, Albanian, or Rouman State would be in the same way either Turkish or Austrian.

On these primitive and abiding races came, as on other parts of Europe, the Roman conquest. That conquest planted Latin colonies on the Dalmatian coast, where the Latin tongue still remains in its Italian variety as the speech of literature and city life; it Romanized one great part of the earlier inhabitants; it had the great political effect of all, that of planting the Roman power in a Greek city, and thereby creating a State, and in the end a nation, which was Roman on one side, and Greek on the other. Then came the wandering of the nations, on which, as regards men of our own race, we need not dwell. The Goths marched at will through the Eastern Empire; but no Teutonic settlement was ever made within its bounds, no lasting Teutonic settlement was ever made even on its border. The part of the Teuton in the West was played, far less perfectly indeed, by the Slav in the East. He is there what the Teuton is here, the great representative of what we

may call the modern European races, those whose part in history began after the establishment of the Rouman power. The differences between the position of the two races are chiefly these. The Slav in the East has pre-Roman races standing alongside of him in a way in which the Teuton has not in the West. On the Greeks and Albanians he has had but little influence; on the Rouman and his language his influence has been far greater, but hardly so great as the influence of the Teuton on the Romance nations and languages of western Europe. The Slav too stands alongside of races which have come in since his own coming, in a way in which the Teuton in the West is still further from doing. That is to say, besides Greeks, Albanians, and Roumans, he stands alongside of Bulgarians, Magyars, and Turks, who have nothing to answer to them in the West. The Slav, in the time of his coming, in the nature of his settlement, answers roughly to the Teuton; his position is what that of the Teuton would be if western Europe had been brought under the power of an alien race at some time later than his own settlement. The Slavs undoubtedly form the greatest element in the population of the Eastern peninsula, and they once reached more widely still. Taking the Slavonic name in its widest meaning, they occupy all the lands from the Danube and its great tributaries southward to the strictly Greek border. The exceptions are where earlier races remain, Greek or Italian on the coast-line, Albanian in the mountains. The Slavs hold the heart of the peninsula, and they hold more than the peninsula itself. The Slav lives equally on both sides of what is or was the frontier of the Austrian and Ottoman empires; indeed, but for another set of causes which have effected eastern Europe, the Slav might have reached uninterruptedly from the Baltic to the Ægæan.

This last set of causes are those which specially distinguish the histories of eastern and of western Europe; a set of causes which, though exactly twelve hundred years old,[4] are still fresh and living, and which are the special causes which have aggravated the special difficulties of the last five hundred years. In Western Europe, though we have had plenty of political conquests, we have had no national migrations since the days

[4] It should be remembered that, as the year 1879 saw the beginning of the liberated Bulgarian State, the year 679 saw the beginning of the first Bulgarian kingdom south of the Danube.

of the Teutonic settlements—at least, if we may extend these last so as to take in the Scandinavian settlements in Britain and Gaul. The Teuton has pressed to the East at the expense of the Slav and the Old-Prussian: the borders between the Romance and the Teutonic nations in the West have fluctuated; but no third set of nations has come in, strange alike to the Roman and the Teuton and to the whole Aryan family. As the Huns of Attila showed themselves in western Europe as passing ravagers, so did the Magyars at a later day; so did the Ottoman Turks in a day later still, when they besieged Vienna and laid waste the Venetian mainland. But all these Turanian invaders appeared in western Europe simply as passing invaders; in eastern Europe their part has been widely different. Besides the temporary dominion of Avars, Patzinaks, Chazars, Cumans, and a crowd of others, three bodies of more abiding settlers, the Bulgarians, the Magyars, and the Mongol conquerors of Russia, have come in by one path; a fourth, the Ottoman Turks, have come in by another path. Among all these invasions we have one case of thorough assimilation, and only one. The original Finnish Bulgarians have, like Western conquerors, been lost among Slavonic subjects and neighbors. The geographical function of the Magyar has been to keep the two great groups of Slavonic nations apart. To his coming, more than to any other cause, we may attribute the great historical gap which separates the Slav of the Baltic from his southern kinsfolk. The work of the Ottoman Turk we all know. These latter settlers remain alongside of the Slav, just as the Slav remains alongside of the earlier settlers. The Slavonized Bulgarians are the only instance of assimilation such as we are used to in the West. All the other races, old and new, from the Albanian to the Ottoman, are still there, each keeping its national being and its national speech. And in one part of the ancient Dacia we must add quite a distinct element, the element of Teutonic occupation in a form unlike any in which we see it in the West, in the shape of the Saxons of Transylvania.

We have thus worked out our point in detail. While in each Western country some one of the various races which have settled in it has, speaking roughly, assimilated the others, in the lands which are left under the rule of the Turk, or which

have been lately delivered from his rule, all the races that have ever settled in the country still abide side by side. So when we pass into the lands which form the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, we find that that composite dominion is just as much opposed as the dominion of the Turk is to those ideas of nationality towards which Western Europe has been long feeling its way. We have seen by the example of Switzerland that it is possible to make an artificial nation out of fragments which have split off from three several nations. But the Austro-Hungarian monarchy is not a nation, not even an artificial nation of this kind. Its elements are not bound together in the same way as the three elements of the Swiss Confederation. It does indeed contain one whole nation in the form of the Magyars; we might say that it contains two, if we reckon the Czechs for a distinct nation. Of its other elements, we may for the moment set aside those parts of Germany which are so strangely united with the crowns of Hungary and Dalmatia. In those parts of the monarchy which come within the more strictly Eastern lands—the Roman and the Rouman—we may so distinguish the Romance-speaking inhabitants of Dalmatia and the Romance-speaking inhabitants of Transylvania. The Slav of the north and of the south, the Magyar conqueror, the Saxon immigrant, all abide as distinct races. That the Ottoman is not to be added to our list in Hungary, while he is to be added in lands farther south, is simply because he has been driven out of Hungary, while he is allowed to abide in lands farther south. No point is more important to insist on now than the fact that the Ottoman once held the greater part of Hungary by exactly the same right, the right of the strongest, as that by which he still holds Macedonia and Epeiros. It is simply the result of a century of warfare, from Sobieski to Joseph II, which fixed the boundary which only yesterday seemed eternal to diplomatists, but which now seems to have vanished. That boundary has advanced and gone back over and over again. As Buda once was Turkish, Belgrade has more than once been Austrian. The whole of the southeastern lands, Austrian, Turkish, and independent, from the Carpathian Mountains southward, present the same characteristic of permanence and distinctness among the several races which occupy them. The several races may lie, here in large con-

tinuous masses, there in small detached settlements; but there they all are in their distinctness. There is among them plenty of living and active national feeling; but while in the West political arrangements for the most part follow the great lines of national feeling, in the East the only way in which national feeling can show itself is by protesting, whether in arms or otherwise, against existing political arrangements. Save the Magyars alone, the ruling race in the Hungarian kingdom, there is no case in those lands in which the whole continuous territory inhabited by speakers of the same tongue is placed under a separate national government of its own. And, even in this case, the identity between nation and government is imperfect in two ways. It is imperfect, because, after all, though Hungary has a separate national government in internal matters, yet it is not the Hungarian kingdom, but the Austro-Hungarian monarchy of which it forms a part, which counts as a power among the other powers of Europe. And the national character of the Hungarian government is equally imperfect from the other side. It is national as regards the Magyar; it is not national as regards the Slav, the Saxon, and the Rouman. Since the liberation of part of Bulgaria, no whole European nation is under the rule of the Turk. No one nation of the southeast peninsula forms a single national government. One fragment of a nation is free under a national government, another fragment is ruled by civilized strangers, a third is trampled down by barbarians. The existing States of Greece, Roumania, and Servia are far from taking in the whole of the Greek, Rouman, and Servian nations. In all these lands, Austrian, Turkish, and independent, there is no difficulty in marking off the several nations; only in no case do the nations answer to any existing political power.

In all these cases, where nationality and government are altogether divorced, language becomes yet more distinctly the test of nationality than it is in Western lands where nationality and government do to some extent coincide. And when nationality and language do not coincide in the East, it is owing to another cause, of which also we know nothing in the West. In many cases religion takes the place of nationality; or rather the ideas of religion and nationality can hardly be distinguished. In the West a man's nationality is in no way af-

fected by the religion which he professes, or even by his change from one religion to another. In the East it is otherwise. The Christian renegade who embraces Islam becomes for most practical purposes a Turk. Even if, as in Crete and Bosnia, he keeps his Greek or Slavonic language, he remains Greek or Slav only in a secondary sense. For the first principle of the Mahometan religion, the lordship of the true believer over the infidel, cuts off the possibility of any true national fellowship between the true believer and the infidel. Even the Greek or Armenian who embraces the Latin creed goes far toward parting with his nationality as well as with his religion. For the adoption of the Latin creed implies what is in some sort the adoption of a new allegiance, the accepting of the authority of the Roman bishop. In the Armenian indeed we are came very near to the phenomena of the farther East, where names like Parsee and Hindoo, names in themselves as strictly ethnical as Englishman or Frenchman, have come to express distinctions in which religion and nationality are absolutely the same thing. Of this whole class of phenomena the Jew is of course the crowning example. But we speak of these matters here only as bringing in an element in the definition of nationality to which we are unused in the West. But it quite comes within our present subject to give one definition from the southeastern lands. What is the Greek? Clearly he who is at once a Greek in speech and orthodox in faith. The Hellenic Mussulmans in Crete, even the Hellenic Latins in some of the other islands, are at the most imperfect members of the Hellenic body. The utmost that can be said is that they keep the power of again entering that body, either by their own return to the national faith, or by such a change in the state of things as shall make difference in religion no longer inconsistent with true national fellowship.

Thus, wherever we go, we find language to be the rough practical test of nationality. The exceptions are many; they may perhaps outnumber the instances which conform to the rule. Still they are exceptions. Community of language does not imply community of blood; it might be added that diversity of language does not imply diversity of blood. But community of language is, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, a presumption of the community of blood, and

it is proof of something which for practical purposes is the same as community of blood. To talk of "the Latin race," is in strictness absurd. We know that the so-called race is simply made up of those nations which adopted the Latin language. The Celtic, Teutonic, and Slavonic races may conceivably have been formed by a like artificial process. But the presumption is the other way; and if such a process ever took place, it took place long before history began. The Celtic, Teutonic, and Slavonic races come before us as groups of mankind marked out by the test of language. Within those races separate nations are again marked out by a stricter application of the test of language. Within the race we may have languages which are clearly akin to each other, but which need not be mutually intelligible. Within the nation we have only dialects which are mutually intelligible, or which, at all events, gather round some one central dialect which is intelligible to all. We take this standard of races and nations, fully aware that it will not stand a physiological test, but holding that for all practical purposes adoption must pass as equivalent to natural descent. And, among the practical purposes which are affected by the facts of race and nationality, we must, as long as a man is what he is, as long as he has not been created afresh according to some new scientific pattern, not shrink from reckoning those generous emotions which, in the present state of European feeling, are beginning to bind together the greater as well as the lesser groups of mankind. The sympathies of men are beginning to reach wider than could have been dreamed of a century ago. The feeling which was once confined to the mere household extended itself to the tribe or the city. From the tribe or city is extended itself to the nation; from the nation it is beginning to extend itself to the whole race. In some cases it can extend itself to the whole race far more easily than in others. In some cases historical causes have made nations of the same race bitter enemies, while they have made nations of different races friendly allies. The same thing happened in earlier days between tribes and cities of the same nation. But, when hinderances of this kind do not exist, the feeling of race, as something beyond the narrower feeling of nationality, is beginning to be a powerful agent in the feelings and actions of men and of nations. A

long series of mutual wrongs, conquest, and oppression on one side, avenged by conquest and oppression on the other side, have made the Slav of Poland and the Slav of Russia the bitterest of enemies. No such hinderance exists to stop the flow of natural and generous feeling between the Slav of Russia and the Slav of the southeastern lands. Those whose statesmanship consists in some hand-to-mouth shift for the moment, whose wisdom consists in refusing to look either back to the past or onward to the future, cannot understand this great fact of our times; and what they cannot understand they mock at. But the fact exists, and does its work in spite of them. And it does its work none the less because in some cases the feeling of sympathy is awakened by a claim of kindred, where, in the sense of the physiologist or the genealogist, there is no kindred at all. The practical view, historical or political, will accept as members of this or that race or nation many members whom the physiologist would shut out, whom the English lawyer would shut out, but whom the Roman lawyer would gladly welcome to every privilege of the stock on which they were grafted. The line of the Scipios, of the Cæsars, and of the Antonines, was continued by adoption; and for all practical purposes the nations of the earth have agreed to follow the examples set them by their masters.

SCIENCE AND CULTURE

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BY

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

1825—1895

Thomas Henry Huxley was born in 1825 at Ealing, near London. He studied medicine in the medical school of Charing Cross Hospital, and in 1846 entered the medical service of the Royal Navy, officiating as assistant surgeon to H. M. S. Rattlesnake during the surveying cruise in the South Pacific and Torres Straits. During the three years of the survey Huxley studied the numerous marine animals which were collected from time to time, and sent home notes of his observations, which were published in the "Philosophical Transactions" under the title of "On the Anatomy and Affinities of the Family of the Medusæ." Further contributions to the same work were published, and were so highly appreciated that in 1851 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and next year received one of the two royal medals of the society. He had now taken his place as one of the most distinguished naturalists and comparative anatomists of the age, and in 1854 he was appointed successor to Edward Forbes as professor of natural history in the Royal School of Mines. His scientific publications have earned for him fame and honors both at home and abroad. The most notable of these works are—"Observations on Glaciers," written jointly with John Tyndall, "On the Theory of the Vertebrate Skull," "The Oceanic Hydrozoa," "Man's Place in Nature," "Lectures on Comparative Anatomy," "Lessons in Elementary Physiology," "Classification of Animals," "Lay Sermons, Addresses, and Reviews," "Science and Culture, and Other Essays," and "A Course of Instruction in Elementary Biology." The contributions of Huxley to scientific journals and associations are much too numerous for us to mention here. Some of his lectures on the "Phenomena of Organic Nature," delivered to working-men at the Museum of Practical Geology, have been published in separate form, and widely circulated.

From 1871 to 1880 he filled the post of Secretary to the Royal Society, of which in 1883 he was elected President. In 1876 Huxley paid a visit to the United States, and delivered an address on university education at the opening of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and also gave three lectures on "Evolution" in New York. During the early eighties he filled the post of Inspector of Fisheries. In 1885 he retired from official work, from his lectures, and from the presidency of the Royal Society. Thereafter he devoted himself principally to work in his study, producing during the last ten years of his life a large number of brilliant essays. His essays are noted for artistic finish and excellence in form of expression.

SCIENCE AND CULTURE

SIX years ago, as some of my present hearers[1] may remember, I had the privilege of addressing a large assemblage of the inhabitants of this city, who had gathered together to do honor to the memory of their famous townsman, Joseph Priestley; and, if any satisfaction attaches to posthumous glory, we may hope that the manes of the burnt-out philosopher were then finally appeased.

No man, however, who is endowed with a fair share of common-sense, and not more than a fair share of vanity, will identify either contemporary or posthumous fame with the highest good; and Priestley's life leaves no doubt that he, at any rate, set a much higher value upon the advancement of knowledge, and the promotion of that freedom of thought which is at once the cause and the consequence of intellectual progress.

Hence I am disposed to think that, if Priestley could be amongst us to-day, the occasion of our meeting would afford him even greater pleasure than the proceedings which celebrated the centenary of his chief discovery. The kindly heart would be moved, the high sense of social duty would be satisfied, by the spectacle of well-earned wealth, neither squandered in tawdry luxury and vainglorious show, nor scattered with the careless charity which blesses neither him that gives nor him that takes, but expended in the execution of a well-considered plan for the aid of present and future generations of those who are willing to help themselves.

We shall all be of one mind thus far. But it is needful to share Priestley's keen interest in physical science; and to have learned, as he had learned, the value of scientific training in fields of inquiry apparently far remote from physical science; in order to appreciate, as he would have appreciated, the value of

[1] Huxley's essay on "Science and Culture" was originally delivered as an address, in 1880, at the opening of Sir Josiah Mason's College, Birmingham, England.

the noble gift which Sir Josiah Mason has bestowed upon the inhabitants of the Midland district.

For us children of the nineteenth century, however, the establishment of a college under the conditions of Sir Josiah Mason's trust has a significance apart from any which it could have possessed a hundred years ago. It appears to be an indication that we are reaching the crisis of the battle, or rather of the long series of battles, which have been fought over education in a campaign which began long before Priestley's time, and will probably not be finished just yet.

In the last century, the combatants were the champions of ancient literature, on the one side, and those of modern literature on the other; but, some thirty years [2] ago, the contest became complicated by the appearance of a third army, ranged round the banner of physical science.

I am not aware that any one has authority to speak in the name of this new host. For it must be admitted to be somewhat of a guerilla force, composed largely of irregulars, each of whom fights pretty much for his own hand. But the impressions of a full private, who has seen a good deal of service in the ranks, respecting the present position of affairs and the conditions of a permanent peace, may not be devoid of interest; and I do not know that I could make a better use of the present opportunity than by laying them before you.

From the time that the first suggestion to introduce physical science into ordinary education was timidly whispered, until now, the advocates of scientific education have met with opposition of two kinds. On the one hand, they have been poohpoohed by the men of business who pride themselves on being the representatives of practicality; while, on the other hand, they have been excommunicated by the classical scholars, in their capacity of Levites in charge of the ark of culture and monopolists of liberal education.

The practical men believed that the idol whom they worship—rule of thumb—has been the source of the past prosperity, and will suffice for the future welfare of the arts and manufactures. They were of opinion that science is speculative rubbish; that theory and practice have nothing to do with

[2] The advocacy of the introduction of physical science into general education by George Combe and others commenced a good deal earlier; but the movement had acquired hardly any practical force before the time to which I refer.

one another; and that the scientific habit of mind is an impediment, rather than an aid, in the conduct of ordinary affairs.

I have used the past tense in speaking of the practical men—for although they were very formidable thirty years ago, I am not sure that the pure species has not been extirpated. In fact, so far as mere argument goes, they have been subjected to such a *feu d'enfer* that it is a miracle if any have escaped. But I have remarked that your typical practical man has an unexpected resemblance to one of Milton's angels. His spiritual wounds, such as are inflicted by logical weapons, may be as deep as a well and as wide as a church door, but beyond shedding a few drops of ichor, celestial or otherwise, he is no whit the worse. So, if any of these opponents be left, I will not waste time in vain repetition of the demonstrative evidence of the practical value of science; but knowing that a parable will sometimes penetrate where syllogisms fail to effect an entrance, I will offer a story for their consideration.

Once upon a time, a boy, with nothing to depend upon but his own vigorous nature, was thrown into the thick of the struggle for existence in the midst of a great manufacturing population. He seems to have had a hard fight, inasmuch as, by the time he was thirty years of age, his total disposable funds amounted to twenty pounds. Nevertheless, middle life found him giving proof of his comprehension of the practical problems he had been roughly called upon to solve, by a career of remarkable prosperity.

Finally, having reached old age with its well-earned surroundings of "honor, troops of friends," the hero of my story bethought himself of those who were making a like start in life, and how he could stretch out a helping hand to them.

After long and anxious reflection this successful practical man of business could devise nothing better than to provide them with the means of obtaining "sound, extensive, and practical scientific knowledge." And he devoted a large part of his wealth and five years of incessant work to this end.

I need not point the moral of a tale which, as the solid and spacious fabric of the Scientific College assures us, is no fable, nor can anything which I could say intensify the force of this practical answer to practical objections.

We may take it for granted then, that, in the opinion of

those best qualified to judge, the diffusion of thorough scientific education is an absolutely essential condition of industrial progress; and that the college which has been opened to-day will confer an inestimable boon upon those whose livelihood is to be gained by the practice of the arts and manufactures of the district.

The only question worth discussion is, whether the conditions, under which the work of the college is to be carried out, are such as to give it the best possible chance of achieving permanent success.

Sir Josiah Mason, without doubt most wisely, has left very large freedom of action to the trustees, to whom he proposes ultimately to commit the administration of the college, so that they may be able to adjust its arrangements in accordance with the changing conditions of the future. But, with respect to three points, he has laid most explicit injunctions upon both administrators and teachers.

Party politics are forbidden to enter into the minds of either, so far as the work of the college is concerned; theology is as sternly banished from its precincts; and finally, it is especially declared that the college shall make no provision for "mere literary instruction and education."

It does not concern me at present to dwell upon the first two injunctions any longer than may be needful to express my full conviction of their wisdom. But the third prohibition brings us face to face with those other opponents of scientific education, who are by no means in the moribund condition of the practical man, but alive, alert, and formidable.

It is not impossible that we shall hear this express exclusion of "literary instruction and education" from a college which, nevertheless, professes to give a high and efficient education, sharply criticised. Certainly the time was that the Levites of culture would have sounded their trumpets against its walls as against an educational Jericho.

How often have we not been told that the study of physical science is incompetent to confer culture; that it touches none of the higher problems of life; and, what is worse, that the continual devotion to scientific studies tends to generate a narrow and bigoted belief in the applicability of scientific methods to the search after truth of all kinds. How frequently one has

reason to observe that no reply to a troublesome argument tells so well as calling its author a " mere scientific specialist." And, as I am afraid it is not permissible to speak of this form of opposition to scientific education in the past tense; may we not expect to be told that this, not only omission, but prohibition, of " mere literary instruction and education " is a patent example of scientific narrow-mindedness?

I am not acquainted with Sir Josiah Mason's reasons for the action which he has taken; but if, as I apprehend is the case, he refers to the ordinary classical course of our schools and universities by the name of " mere literary instruction and education," I venture to offer sundry reasons of my own in support of that action.

For I hold very strongly by two convictions. The first is, that neither the discipline nor the subject-matter of classical education is of such direct value to the student of physical science as to justify the expenditure of valuable time upon either; and the second is, that for the purpose of attaining real culture, an exclusively scientific education is at least as effectual as an exclusively literary education.

I need hardly point out to you that these opinions, especially the latter, are diametrically opposed to those of the great majority of educated Englishmen, influenced as they are by school and university traditions. In their belief, culture is obtainable only by a liberal education; and a liberal education is synonymous, not merely with education and instruction in literature, but in one particular form of literature, namely, that of Greek and Roman antiquity. They hold that the man who has learned Latin and Greek, however little, is educated; while he who is versed in other branches of knowledge, however deeply, is a more or less respectable specialist, not admissible into cultured caste. The stamp of the educated man, the university degree, is not for him.

I am too well acquainted with the generous catholicity of spirit, the true sympathy with scientific thought, which pervades the writings of our chief apostle of culture to identify him with these opinions; and yet one may cull from one and another of those epistles to the Philistines, which so much delight all who do not answer to that name, sentences which lend them some support.

Mr. Arnold tells us that the meaning of culture is "to know the best that has been thought and said in the world." It is the criticism of life contained in literature. That criticism regards "Europe as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have, for their common outfit, a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Special, local, and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this programme. And what is that but saying that we too, all of us, as individuals, the more thoroughly we carry it out, shall make the more progress?"

We have here to deal with two distinct propositions. The first, that a criticism of life is the essence of culture; the second, that literature contains the materials which suffice for the construction of such a criticism.

I think that we must all assent to the first proposition. For culture certainly means something quite different from learning or technical skill. It implies the possession of an ideal, and the habit of critically estimating the value of things by comparison with a theoretic standard. Perfect culture should apply a complete theory of life, based upon a clear knowledge alike of its possibilities and of its limitations.

But we may agree to all this, and yet strongly dissent from the assumption that literature alone is competent to supply this knowledge. After having learnt all that Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity have thought and said, and all that modern literatures have to tell us, it is not self-evident that we have laid a sufficiently broad and deep foundation for that criticism of life which constitutes culture.

Indeed, to any one acquainted with the scope of physical science, it is not at all evident. Considering progress only in the "intellectual and spiritual sphere," I find myself wholly unable to admit that either nations or individuals will really advance, if their common outfit draws nothing from the stores of physical science. I should say that an army, without weapons of precision, and with no particular base of operations, might more hopefully enter upon a campaign on the Rhine,

than a man, devoid of a knowledge of what physical science has done in the last century, upon a criticism of life.

When a biologist meets with an anomaly, he instinctively turns to the study of development to clear it up. The rationale of contradictory opinions may with equal confidence be sought in history.

It is, happily, no new thing that Englishmen should employ their wealth in building and endowing institutions for educational purposes. But, five or six hundred years ago, deeds of foundation expressed or implied conditions as nearly as possible contrary to those which have been thought expedient by Sir Josiah Mason. That is to say, physical science was practically ignored, while a certain literary training was enjoined as a means to the acquirement of knowledge which was essentially theological.

The reason of this singular contradiction between the actions of men alike animated by a strong and disinterested desire to promote the welfare of their fellows, is easily discovered.

At that time, in fact, if any one desired knowledge beyond such as could be obtained by his own observation, or by common conversation, his first necessity was to learn the Latin language, inasmuch as all the higher knowledge of the western world was contained in works written in that language. Hence, Latin grammar, with logic and rhetoric, studied through Latin, were the fundamentals of education. With respect to the substance of the knowledge imparted through this channel, the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, as interpreted and supplemented by the Romish Church, were held to contain a complete and infallibly true body of information.

Theological dicta were, to the thinkers of those days, that which the axioms and definitions of Euclid are to the geometers of these. The business of the philosophers of the Middle Ages was to deduce from the data furnished by the theologians, conclusions in accordance with ecclesiastical decrees. They were allowed the high privilege of showing, by logical process, how and why that which the Church said was true, must be true. And if their demonstrations fell short of or exceeded this limit, the Church was maternally ready to check their aberrations, if need be, by the help of the secular arm.

Between the two, our ancestors were furnished with a com-

pact and complete criticism of life. They were told how the world began, and how it would end; they learned that all material existence was but a base and insignificant blot upon the fair face of the spiritual world, and that nature was, to all intents and purposes, the play-ground of the devil; they learned that the earth is the centre of the visible universe, and that man is the cynosure of things terrestrial; and more especially is it inculcated that the course of nature had no fixed order, but that it could be, and constantly was, altered by the agency of innumerable spiritual beings, good and bad, according as they were moved by the deeds and prayers of men. The sum and substance of the whole doctrine was to produce the conviction that the only thing really worth knowing in this world was how to secure that place in a better which, under certain conditions, the Church promised.

Our ancestors had a living belief in this theory of life, and acted upon it in their dealings with education, as in all other matters. Culture meant saintliness—after the fashion of the saints of those days; the education that led to it was, of necessity, theological; and the way to theology lay through Latin.

That the study of nature—further than was requisite for the satisfaction of everyday wants—should have any bearing on human life was far from the thoughts of men thus trained. Indeed, as nature had been cursed for man's sake, it was an obvious conclusion that those who meddled with nature were likely to come into pretty close contact with Satan. And, if any born scientific investigator followed his instincts, he might safely reckon upon earning the reputation, and probably upon suffering the fate, of a sorcerer.

Had the western world been left to itself in Chinese isolation, there is no saying how long this state of things might have endured. But, happily, it was not left to itself. Even earlier than the thirteenth century, the development of Moorish civilization in Spain and the great movement of the Crusades had introduced the leaven which, from that day to this, has never ceased to work. At first, through the intermediation of Arabic translations, afterward by the study of the originals, the western nations of Europe became acquainted with the writings of the ancient philosophers and poets, and, in time, with the whole of the vast literature of antiquity.

Whatever there was of high intellectual aspiration or dominant capacity in Italy, France, Germany, and England, spent itself for centuries in taking possession of the rich inheritance left by the dead civilizations of Greece and Rome. Marvellously aided by the invention of printing, classical learning spread and flourished. Those who possessed it prided themselves on having attained the highest culture then within the reach of mankind.

And justly. For, saving Dante on his solitary pinnacle, there was no figure in modern literature at the time of the Renaissance to compare with the men of antiquity; there was no art to compete with their sculpture; there was no physical science but that which Greece had created. Above all, there was no other example of perfect intellectual freedom—of the unhesitating acceptance of reason as the sole guide to truth and the supreme arbiter of conduct.

The new learning necessarily soon exerted a profound influence upon education. The language of the monks and schoolmen seemed little better than gibberish to scholars fresh from Vergil and Cicero, and the study of Latin was placed upon a new foundation. Moreover, Latin itself ceased to afford the sole key to knowledge. The student who sought the highest thought of antiquity found only a second-hand reflection of it in Roman literature, and turned his face to the full light of the Greeks. And after a battle, not altogether dissimilar to that which is at present being fought over the teaching of physical science, the study of Greek was recognized as an essential element of all higher education.

Thus the humanists, as they were called, won the day; and the great reform which they effected was of incalculable service to mankind. But the Nemesis of all reformers is finality; and the reformers of education, like those of religion, fell into the profound, however common, error of mistaking the beginning for the end of the work of reformation.

The representatives of the humanists in the nineteenth century take their stand upon classical education as the sole avenue to culture, as firmly as if we were still in the age of Renaissance. Yet, surely, the present intellectual relations of the modern and the ancient worlds are profoundly different from those which obtained three centuries ago. Leaving aside the

existence of a great and characteristically modern literature, of modern painting, and, especially, of modern music, there is one feature of the present state of the civilized world which separates it more widely from the Renaissance than the Renaissance was separated from the Middle Ages.

This distinctive character of our own times lies in the vast and constantly increasing part which is played by natural knowledge. Not only is our daily life shaped by it, not only does the prosperity of millions of men depend upon it, but our whole theory of life has long been influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the general conceptions of the universe, which have been forced upon us by physical science.

In fact, the most elementary acquaintance with the results of scientific investigation shows us that they offer a broad and striking contradiction to the opinions so implicitly credited and taught in the Middle Ages.

The notions of the beginning and the end of the world entertained by our forefathers are no longer credible. It is very certain that the earth is not the chief body in the material universe, and that the world is not subordinated to man's use. It is even more certain that nature is the expression of a definite order with which nothing interferes, and that the chief business of mankind is to learn that order and govern themselves accordingly. Moreover this scientific "criticism of life" presents itself to us with different credentials from any other. It appeals not to authority, nor to what anybody may have thought or said, but to nature. It admits that all our interpretations of natural fact are more or less imperfect and symbolic, and bids the learner seek for truth not among words but among things. It warns us that the assertion which outstrips evidence is not only a blunder but a crime.

The purely classical education advocated by the representatives of the humanists in our day gives no inkling of all this. A man may be a better scholar than Erasmus, and know no more of the chief causes of the present intellectual fermentation than Erasmus did. Scholarly and pious persons, worthy of all respect, favor us with allocutions upon the sadness of the antagonism of science to their mediæval way of thinking, which betray an ignorance of the first principles of scientific investigation, an incapacity for understanding what a man of science

means by veracity, and an unconsciousness of the weight of established scientific truths, which is almost comical.

There is no great force in the *tu quoque* argument, or else the advocates of scientific education might fairly enough retort upon the modern humanists that they may be learned specialists, but that they possess no such sound foundation for a criticism of life as deserves the name of culture. And, indeed, if we were disposed to be cruel, we might urge that the humanists have brought this reproach upon themselves, not because they are too full of the spirit of the ancient Greek, but because they lack it.

The period of the Renaissance is commonly called that of the "Revival of Letters," as if the influences then brought to bear upon the mind of Western Europe has been wholly exhausted in the field of literature. I think it is very commonly forgotten that the revival of science, effected by the same agency, although less conspicuous, was not less momentous.

In fact, the few and scattered students of nature of that day picked up the clew to her secrets exactly as it fell from the hands of the Greeks a thousand years before. The foundations of mathematics were so well laid by them that our children learn their geometry from a book written for the schools of Alexandria two thousand years ago. Modern astronomy is the natural continuation and development of the work of Hipparchus and of Ptolemy; modern physics of that of Democritus and of Archimedes; it was long before modern biological science outgrew the knowledge bequeathed to us by Aristotle, by Theophrastus, and by Galen.

We cannot know all the best thoughts and sayings of the Greeks unless we know what they thought about natural phenomena. We cannot fully apprehend their criticism of life unless we understand the extent to which that criticism was affected by scientific conceptions. We falsely pretend to be the inheritors of their culture, unless we are penetrated, as the best minds among them were, with an unhesitating faith that the free employment of reason, in accordance with scientific method, is the sole method of reaching truth.

Thus I venture to think that the pretensions of our modern humanists to the possession of the monopoly of culture and to the exclusive inheritance of the spirit of antiquity must be

abated, if not abandoned. But I should be very sorry that anything I have said should be taken to imply a desire on my part to depreciate the value of classical education, as it might be and as it sometimes is. The native capacities of mankind vary no less than their opportunities; and while culture is one, the road by which one man may best reach it is widely different from that which is most advantageous to another. Again, while scientific education is yet inchoate and tentative, classical education is thoroughly well organized upon the practical experience of generations of teachers. So that, given ample time for learning and destination for ordinary life, or for a literary career, I do not think that a young Englishman in search of culture can do better than follow the course usually marked out for him, supplementing its deficiencies by his own efforts.

But for those who mean to make science their serious occupation; or who intend to follow the profession of medicine; or who have to enter early upon the business of life; for all these, in my opinion, classical education is a mistake; and it is for this reason that I am glad to see "mere literary education and instruction" shut out from the curriculum of Sir Josiah Mason's college, seeing that its inclusion would probably lead to the introduction of the ordinary smattering of Latin and Greek.

Nevertheless, I am the last person to question the importance of genuine literary education, or to suppose that intellectual culture can be complete without it. An exclusively scientific training will bring about a mental twist as surely as an exclusively literary training. The value of the cargo does not compensate for a ship's being out of trim; and I should be very sorry to think that the Scientific College would turn out none but lop-sided men.

There is no need, however, that such a catastrophe should happen. Instruction in English, French, and German is provided, and thus the three greatest literatures of the modern world are made accessible to the student.

French and German, and especially the latter language, are absolutely indispensable to those who desire full knowledge in any department of science. But even supposing that the knowledge of these languages acquired is not more than suf-

ficient for purely scientific purposes, every Englishman has, in his native tongue, an almost perfect instrument of literary expression; and, in his own literature, models of every kind of literary excellence. If an Englishman cannot get literary culture out of his Bible, his Shakespeare, his Milton, neither, in my belief, will the profoundest study of Homer and Sophocles, Vergil and Horace, give it to him.

Thus, since the constitution of the college makes sufficient provision for literary as well as for scientific education, and since artistic instruction is also contemplated, it seems to me that a fairly complete culture is offered to all who are willing to take advantage of it.

But I am not sure that at this point the "practical" man, scotched but not slain, may ask what all this talk about culture has to do with an institution, the object of which is defined to be "to promote the prosperity of the manufactures and the industry of the country." He may suggest that what is wanted for this end is not culture, nor even a purely scientific discipline, but simply a knowledge of applied science.

I often wish that this phrase, "applied science," had never been invented. For it suggests that there is a sort of scientific knowledge of direct practical use, which can be studied apart from another sort of scientific knowledge, which is of no practical utility, and which is termed "pure science." But there is no more complete fallacy than this. What people call applied science is nothing but the application of pure science to particular classes of problems. It consists of deductions from those general principles, established by reasoning and observation, which constitute pure science. No one can safely make these deductions until he has a firm grasp of the principles; and he can obtain that grasp only by personal experience of the operations of observation and of reasoning on which they are founded.

Almost all the processes employed in the arts and manufactures fall within the range either of physics or of chemistry. In order to improve them one must thoroughly understand them; and no one has a chance of really understanding them, unless he has obtained that mastery of principles and that habit of dealing with facts which is given by long-continued and well-directed purely scientific training in the physical and

the chemical laboratory. So that there really is no question as to the necessity of purely scientific discipline, even if the work of the college were limited by the narrowest interpretation of its stated aims.

And, as to the desirableness of a wider culture than that yielded by science alone, it is to be recollected that the improvement of manufacturing processes is only one of the conditions which contribute to the prosperity of industry. Industry is a means and not an end; and mankind work only to get something which they want. What that something is depends partly on their innate, and partly on their acquired, desires.

If the wealth resulting from prosperous industry is to be spent upon the gratification of unworthy desires, if the increasing perfection of manufacturing processes is to be accompanied by an increasing debasement of those who carry them on, I do not see the good of industry and prosperity.

Now it is perfectly true that men's views of what is desirable depend upon their characters; and that the innate proclivities to which we give that name are not touched by any amount of instruction. But it does not follow that even mere intellectual education may not, to an indefinite extent, modify the practical manifestation of the characters of men in their actions, by supplying them with motives unknown to the ignorant. A pleasure-loving character will have pleasure of some sort; but, if you give him the choice, he may prefer pleasures which do not degrade him to those which do. And this choice is offered to every man who possesses in literary or artistic culture a never-failing source of pleasures, which are neither withered by age, nor staled by custom, nor embittered in the recollection by the pangs of self-reproach.

If the institution opened to-day fulfils the intention of its founder, the picked intelligences among all classes of the population of this district will pass through it. No child born in Birmingham, henceforward, if he have the capacity to profit by the opportunities offered to him, first in the primary and other schools, and afterward in the Scientific College, need fail to obtain, not merely the instruction, but the culture most appropriate to the conditions of his life.

Within these walls the future employer and the future artisan may sojourn together for awhile, and carry, through all their lives, the stamp of the influences then brought to bear upon

them. Hence, it is not beside the mark to remind you that the prosperity of industry depends not merely upon the improvement of manufacturing processes, not merely upon the ennobling of the individual character, but upon a third condition, namely, a clear understanding of the conditions of social life on the part of both the capitalist and the operative, and their agreement upon common principles of social action. They must learn that social phenomena are as much the expression of natural laws as any others; that no social arrangements can be permanent unless they harmonize with the requirements of social statics and dynamics; and that, in the nature of things, there is an arbiter whose decisions execute themselves.

But this knowledge is only to be obtained by the application of the methods of investigation adopted in physical researches to the investigation of the phenomena of society. Hence, I confess I should like to see one addition made to the excellent scheme of education propounded for the college, in the shape of provision for the teaching of sociology. For though we are all agreed that party politics are to have no place in the instruction of the college; yet in this country, practically governed as it is now by universal suffrage, every man who does his duty must exercise political functions. And, if the evils which are inseparable from the good of political liberty are to be checked, if the perpetual oscillation of nations between anarchy and despotism is to be replaced by the steady march of self-restraining freedom; it will be because men will gradually bring themselves to deal with political, as they now deal with scientific questions; to be as ashamed of undue haste and partisan prejudice in the one case as in the other; and to believe that the machinery of society is at least as delicate as that of a spinning-jenny, and as little likely to be improved by the meddling of those who have not taken the trouble to master the principles of its action.

In conclusion, I am sure that I make myself the mouthpiece of all present in offering to the venerable founder of the institution, which now commences its beneficent career, our congratulations on the completion of his work; and in expressing the conviction that the remotest posterity will point to it as a crucial instance of the wisdom which natural piety leads all men to ascribe to their ancestors.

LOVE

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AMBITION

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BY

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK

Sir John Lubbock is the son of the banker, astronomer, and mathematician, Sir John William Lubbock. He was born in London on April 30, 1834, and received his education at a private school and at Eton. At the age of fourteen he entered his father's banking-house, in which he became a partner in 1856, and at his father's death in 1865 he succeeded to the baronetcy. In the course of his distinguished career he was chosen honorary secretary to the Association of London Bankers, first president of the Institute of Bankers, and served as a member of the International Coinage Commission, the Advancement of Science Commission, the Public School Commission, the Education Commission, and the Gold and Silver Commission. In 1870 he was returned to Parliament for Maidstone, and on losing his seat in 1880 he was returned for the London University. In Parliament he devoted himself principally to financial and educational interests, and succeeded in carrying through a number of important measures, such as the Falsification of Accounts bill, the Bank Holidays act, and the Bills of Exchange bill, the Ancient Monument bill, and the Shop Hours bill. From 1872-1880 he was chancellor of the University of London, and he is an honorary graduate of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Dublin, and Würzburg, a fellow of the Royal Linnæan Society, and a trustee of the British Museum. In 1881 he became president of the British Association, and has been identified with many other scientific societies. He has taken high rank as a naturalist and paleontologist.

In addition to over a hundred memoirs to various societies, he has published "Prehistoric Times, as Illustrated by Ancient Remains and the Manners and Customs of Modern Savages" (1865); "The Origin of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man" (1870); "The Origin and Metamorphoses of Insects" (1874); "On British Wild-flowers Considered in Relation to Insects" (1875); "Addresses, Political and Educational" (1879); "Scientific Lectures" (1879); "Fifty Years of Science, an Inaugural Address to the British Association" (1881); "Ants, Bees, and Wasps" (1882); "Flowers, Fruits, and Leaves"; "On Representation"; "The Senses and Instincts of Animals" (1888); and "The Beauties of Nature and the Wonders of the World" (1892).

As an essayist Sir John Lubbock is known to legions of readers through his delightful essays entitled "The Pleasures of Life," which were first published in 1887, and of which numerous editions have been issued during the past twelve years. His essays on "The Use of Life" appeared in 1894 and have proved almost equally popular. A literary critic, in commenting recently on "The Pleasures of Life," said: "This is a work-a-day world; and blessed be the man with the time and happy taste to gather and put before us the choice bits which reveal us to ourselves." Lubbock's essays evince wide reading, and he is most happy in introducing appropriate quotations from the works of other writers. The essays on "Love" and "Ambition" are taken from "The Pleasures of Life."

LOVE

"Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below and saints above;
For love is heaven and heaven is love."—*Scott.*

LOVE is the life and sunshine of life. We are so constituted that we cannot fully enjoy ourselves, or anything else, unless some one we love enjoys it with us. Even if we are alone, we store up our enjoyment in hope of sharing it hereafter with those we love.

Love lasts through life, and adapts itself to every age and circumstance; in childhood for father and mother, in manhood for wife, in age for children, and throughout for brothers and sisters, relations and friends. The strength of friendship is indeed proverbial, and in some cases, as in that of David and Jonathan, is described as surpassing the love of women.

The goodness of Providence to man has been often compared to that of fathers and mothers for their children.

"Just as a mother, with sweet pious face,
Yearns towards her little children from her seat,
Gives one a kiss, another an embrace,
Takes this upon her knees, that on her feet;
And while from actions, looks, complaints, pretences,
She learns their feelings and their various will,
To this a look, to that a word, dispenses,
And, whether stern or smiling, loves them still;
So Providence for us, high infinite,
Makes our necessities its watchful task,
Hearkens to all our prayers, helps all our wants,
And e'en if it denies what seems our right,
Either denies because 'twould have us ask,
Or seems but to deny, or in denying grants." [1]

[1] Filicaja. Translated by Leigh Hunt.

Sir Walter Scott well says—

> "And if there be on Earth a tear
> From passion's dross [2] refined and clear,
> 'Tis that which pious fathers shed
> Upon a duteous daughter's head."

Epaminondas is said to have given as his main reason for rejoicing at the victory of Leuctra, that it would give so much pleasure to his father and mother.

Nor must the love of animals be altogether omitted. It is impossible not to sympathize with the savage when he believes in their immortality, and thinks that after death

> "Admitted to that equal sky
> His faithful dog shall bear him company." [3]

In the "Mahabharata," the great Indian epic, when the family of Pandavas, the heroes, at length reached the gates of heaven, they are welcomed themselves, but are told that their dog cannot come in. Having pleaded in vain, they turn to depart, as they say they can never leave their faithful companion. Then at the last moment the angel at the door relents, and their dog is allowed to enter with them.

We may hope the time will come when we shall learn

> "Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
> With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels." [4]

But at the present moment I am speaking rather of the love which leads to marriage. Such love is the music of life, nay, "there is music in the beauty, and the silent note of love, far sweeter than the sound of any instrument." [5]

The "Symposium" of Plato contains an interesting and amusing disquisition on love.

"Love," Phædrus is made to say, "will make men dare to die for their beloved—love alone; and women as well as men. Of this, Alcestis, the daughter of Pelias, is a monument to all Hellas; for she was willing to lay down her life on behalf of her husband, when no one else would, although he had a father and mother; but the tenderness of her love so far exceeded theirs that she made them seem to be strangers in blood to

[2] Not from passion itself. [3] Pope. [4] Wordsworth. [5] Browne.

their own son, and in name only related to him; and so noble did this action of hers appear to the gods, as well as to men, that among the many who have done virtuously she is one of the very few to whom they have granted the privilege of returning to earth, in admiration of her virtue; such exceeding honor is paid by them to the devotion and virtue of love."

Agathon is even more eloquent—

Love "fills men with affection, and takes away their disaffection, making them meet together at such banquets as these. In sacrifices, feasts, dances, he is our lord—supplying kindness and banishing unkindness, giving friendship and forgiving enmity, the joy of the good, the wonder of the wise, the amazement of the gods, desired by those who have no part in him, and precious to those who have the better part in him; parent of delicacy, luxury, desire, fondness, softness, grace, regardful of the good, regardless of the evil. In every word, work, wish, fear—pilot, comrade, helper, saviour; glory of gods and men, leader best and brightest: in whose footsteps let every man follow, sweetly singing in his honor that sweet strain with which love charms the souls of gods and men."

No doubt, even so there are two Loves, "one, the daughter of Uranus, who has no mother, and is the elder and wiser goddess; and the other, the daughter of Zeus and Dione, who is popular and common"—but let us not examine too closely. Charity tells us even of Guinevere, "that while she lived, she was a good lover and therefore she had a good end." [6]

The origin of love has exercised philosophers almost as much as the origin of evil. The "Symposium" continues with a speech which Plato attributes in joke to Aristophanes, and of which Jowett observes that nothing in Aristophanes is more truly Aristophanic.

The original human nature, he says, was not like the present. The primeval man was round,[7] his back and sides forming a circle; and he had four hands and four feet, one head with two faces, looking opposite ways, set on a round neck and precisely alike. He could walk upright as men now do, backwards or forwards as he pleased, and he could also roll over and over at a great rate, whirling round on his four hands and four feet, eight in all, like tumblers going over and over with their

[6] Malory, "Morte d'Arthur." [7] I avail myself of Dr. Jowett's translation.

legs in the air; this was when he wanted to run fast. Terrible was their might and strength, and the thoughts of their hearts were great, and they made an attack upon the gods; of them is told the tale of Otys and Ephialtes, who, as Homer says, dared to scale heaven, and would have laid hands upon the gods. Doubt reigned in the celestial councils. Should they kill them and annihilate the race with thunder-bolts, as they had done the giants, then there would be an end of the sacrifices and worship which men offered to them; but, on the other hand, the gods could not suffer their insolence to be unrestrained. At last after a good deal of reflection, Zeus discovered a way. He said: "Methinks I have a plan which will humble their pride and mend their manners; they shall continue to exist, but I will cut them in two, which will have a double advantage, for it will halve their strength and we shall have twice as many sacrifices. They shall walk upright on two legs, and if they continue insolent and will not be quiet I will split them again and they shall hop on a single leg." He spoke and cut men in two, "as you might split an egg with a hair." After the division the two parts of man each desiring his other half, came together. So ancient is the desire of one another which is implanted in us, reuniting our original nature, making one of two, and healing the state of man. Each of us when separated is but the indenture of a man, having one side only, like a flat-fish, and he is always looking for his other half.

And when one of them finds his other half, the pair are lost in amazement of love and friendship and intimacy, and one will not be out of the other's sight, as I may say, even for a minute: they will pass their whole lives together; yet they could not explain what they desire of one another. For the intense yearning which each of them has towards the other does not appear to be the desire of lovers' intercourse, but of something else, which the soul of either evidently desires and cannot tell. and of which she has only a dark and doubtful presentiment.

However this may be, there is such instinctive insight in the human heart that we often form our opinion almost instantaneously, and such impressions seldom change, I might even say, they are seldom wrong. Love at first sight sounds like an

imprudence, and yet is almost a revelation. It seems as if we were but renewing the relations of a previous existence.

> "But to see her were to love her,
> Love but her, and love forever." [8]

Yet though experience seldom falsifies such a feeling, happily the reverse does not hold good. The deepest affection is often of slow growth. Many a warm love has been won by faithful devotion.

Montaigne indeed declares that "Few have married for love without repenting it." Dr. Johnson also maintained that marriages would generally be happier if they were arranged by the Lord Chancellor; but I do not think either Montaigne or Johnson were good judges. As Lancelot said to the unfortunate Maid of Astolat, "I love not to be constrained to love, for love must arise of the heart and not by constraint." [9]

Love defies distance and the elements; Sestos and Abydos are divided by the sea, "but Love joined them by an arrow from his bow." [10]

Love can be happy anywhere. Byron wished

> "O that the desert were my dwelling-place,
> With one fair spirit for my minister,
> That I might all forget the human race
> And, hating no one, love but only her."

And many will doubtless have felt

> "O love! what hours were thine and mine
> In lands of palm and southern pine,
> In lands of palm, of orange blossom,
> Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine."

What is true of space holds good equally of time.

> "In peace, love tunes the shepherd's reed;
> In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;
> In halls, in gay attire is seen;
> In hamlets, dances on the green.
> Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
> And men below, and saints above;
> For love is heaven, and heaven is love." [11]

[8] Burns. [9] Malory, "Morte d'Arthur." [10] Symonds. [11] Scott.

Even when, as among some Eastern races, religion and philosophy have combined to depress love, truth reasserts itself in popular sayings, as for instance in the Turkish proverb, "All women are perfection, especially she who loves you."

A French lady having once quoted to Abed-el-Kader the Polish proverb, "A woman draws more with a hair of her head than a pair of oxen well harnessed;" he answered with a smile, "The hair is unnecessary, woman is powerful as fate."

But we like to think of love rather as the angel of happiness than as a ruling force: of the joy of home when "hearts are of each other sure"

> "It is the secret sympathy,
> The silver link, the silken tie,
> Which heart to heart, and mind to mind
> In body and in soul can bind." [12]

What Bacon says of a friend is even truer of a wife; there is "no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less."

Let some one we love come near us and

> "At once it seems that something new or strange
> Has passed upon the flowers, the trees, the ground;
> Some slight but unintelligible change
> On everything around." [13]

We might, I think, apply to love what Homer says of fate:

> "Her feet are tender, for she sets her steps
> Not on the ground, but on the heads of men."

Love and reason divide the life of man. We must give to each its due. If it is impossible to attain to virtue by the aid of reason without love, neither can we do so by means of love alone without reason.

Love, said Melanippides, "sowing in the heart of man the sweet harvest of desire, mixes the sweetest and most beautiful things together."

No one indeed could complain now, with Phædrus in Plato's "Symposium," that love has had no worshippers among the poets. On the contrary, love has brought them many of their

[12] Scott. [13] Trench.

sweetest inspirations; none perhaps nobler or more beautiful than Milton's description of Paradise:

"With thee conversing, I forget all time,
All seasons, and their change, all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams on herb, tree, fruit and flower
Glistering with dew, fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night
With this her solemn bird and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heaven, her starry train:
But neither breath of morn when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds, nor rising sun
On this delightful land, no herb, fruit, flower
Glistering with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
Nor grateful evening mild, nor silent night
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon
Or glittering starlight, without thee is sweet."

Moreover, no one need despair of an ideal marriage. We fortunately differ so much in our tastes; love does so much to create love, that even the humblest may hope for the happiest marriage if only he deserves it; and Shakespeare speaks, as he does so often, for thousands when he says

"She is mine own,
And I as rich in having such a jewel
As twenty seas, if all their sands were pearls,
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold."

True love indeed will not be unreasonable or exacting.

"Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly,
True! a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field,
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.
Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more." [14]

[14] Lovelace.

And yet

> "Alas! how light a cause may move
> Dissension between hearts that love!
> Hearts that the world in vain had tried,
> And sorrow but more closely tied,
> That stood the storm, when waves were rough,
> Yet in a sunny hour fall off,
> Like ships that have gone down at sea
> When heaven was all tranquillity." [15]

For love is brittle. Do not risk even any little jar; it may be

> "The little rift within the lute,
> That by and by will make the music mute,
> And ever widening slowly silence all." [16]

Love is delicate; "Love is hurt with jar and fret," and you might as well expect a violin to remain in tune if roughly used, as love to survive if chilled or driven into itself. But what a pleasure to keep it alive by

> "Little, nameless, unremembered acts
> Of kindness and of love." [17]

"She whom you loved and chose," says Bondi,

> "Is now your bride,
> The gift of heaven, and to your trust consigned;
> Honor her still, though not with passion blind;
> And in her virtue, though you watch, confide,
> Be to her youth a comfort, guardian, guide,
> In whose experience she may safety find;
> And whether sweet or bitter be assigned,
> The joy with her, as well as pain, divide.
> Yield not too much if reason disapprove;
> Nor too much force; the partner of your life
> Should neither victim be, nor tyrant prove.
> Thus shall that rein, which often mars the bliss
> Of wedlock, scarce be felt; and thus your wife
> Ne'er in the husband shall the lover miss." [18]

Every one is ennobled by true love—

> "'Tis better to have loved and lost
> Than never to have loved at all." [19]

[15] Moore. [16] Tennyson. [17] Wordsworth.
[18] Bondi. Tr. by Glassford. [19] Tennyson.

Perhaps no one ever praised a woman more gracefully in a sentence than Steele when he said of Lady Elizabeth Hastings that "to know her was a liberal education;" but every woman may feel as she improves herself that she is not only laying in a store of happiness for herself, but also raising and blessing him whom she would most wish to see happy and good.

Love, true love, grows and deepens with time. Husband and wife, who are married indeed, live

> "By each other, till to love and live
> Be one." [20]

Nor does it end with life. A mother's love knows no bounds.

> "They err who tell us love can die,
> With life all other passions fly,
> All others are but vanity.
> In Heaven ambition cannot dwell,
> Nor avarice in the vaults of Hell;
> Earthly these passions of the Earth;
> They perish where they have their birth,
> But love is indestructible;
> Its holy flame forever burneth,
> From Heaven it came, to Heaven returneth;
> Too oft on Earth a troubled guest,
> At times deceived, at times opprest,
> It here is tried and purified,
> Then hath in Heaven its perfect rest:
> It soweth here with toil and care,
> But the harvest time of love is there.
>
> "The mother when she meets on high
> The babe she lost in infancy,
> Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
> The day of woe, the watchful night,
> For all her sorrow, all her tears,
> An over-payment of delight?" [21]

As life wears on the love of husband or wife, of friends and of children, becomes the great solace and delight of age. The one recalls the past, the other gives interest to the future; and in our children, it has been truly said, we live our lives again.

[20] Swinburne. [21] Southey.

AMBITION

" Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble minds)
To scorn delights and live laborious days."—*Milton.*

IF fame be the last infirmity of noble minds, ambition is often the first; though, when properly directed, it may be no feeble aid to virtue.

Had not my youthful mind, says Cicero, " from many precepts, from many writings, drunk in this truth, that glory and virtue ought to be the darling, nay, the only, wish in life; that, to attain these, the torments of the flesh, with the perils of death and exile, are to be despised; never had I exposed my person in so many encounters, and to these daily conflicts with the worst of men, for your deliverance. But on this head, books are full; the voice of the wise is full; the examples of antiquity are full: and all these the night of barbarism had still enveloped, had it not been enlightened by the sun of science."

The poet tells us that

" The many fail: the one succeeds." [1]

But this is scarcely true. All succeed who deserve, though not perhaps as they hoped. An honorable defeat is better than a mean victory, and no one is really the worse for being beaten, unless he loses heart. Though we may not be able to attain, that is no reason why we should not aspire.

I know, says Morris,

" How far high failure overleaps the bound
Of low successes."

And Bacon assures us that " if a man look sharp and attentively he shall see Fortune; for though she is blind, she is not invisible."

[1] Tennyson.

To give ourselves a reasonable prospect of success we must realize what we hope to achieve; and then make the most of our opportunities. Of these the use of time is one of the most important. What have we to do with time, asks Oliver Wendell Holmes, but to fill it up with labor.

"At the battle of Montebello," said Napoleon, "I ordered Kellermann to attack with 800 horse, and with these he separated the 6,000 Hungarian grenadiers before the very eyes of the Austrian cavalry. This cavalry was half a league off, and required a quarter of an hour to arrive on the field of action; and I have observed that it is always these quarters of an hour that decide the fate of a battle," including, we may add, the battle of life.

Nor must we spare ourselves in other ways, for

> "He who thinks in strife
> To earn a deathless fame, must do, nor ever care for life." [2]

In the excitement of the struggle, moreover, he will suffer comparatively little from wounds and blows which would otherwise cause intense suffering.

It is well to weigh scrupulously the object in view, to run as little risk as may be, to count the cost with care.

But when the mind is once made up, there must be no looking back, you must spare yourself no labor, nor shrink from danger.

> "He either fears his fate too much
> Or his deserts are small,
> That dares not put it to the touch
> To gain or lose it all." [3]

"Glory," says Renan, "is after all the thing which has the best chance of not being altogether vanity." But what is glory?

Marcus Aurelius observes that "a spider is proud when it has caught a fly, a man when he has caught a hare, another when he has taken a little fish in a net, another when he has taken wild boars, another when he has taken bears, and another when he has taken Sarmatians;" [4] but this, if from one

[2] Beowulf.
[3] Montrose.
[4] He is referring here to one of his expeditions.

point of view it shows the vanity of fame, also encourages us with the evidence that everyone may succeed if his objects are but reasonable.

Alexander may be taken as almost a type of ambition in its usual form, though carried to an extreme.

His desire was to conquer, not to inherit or to rule. When news was brought that his father Philip had taken some town, or won some battle, instead of appearing delighted with it, he used to say to his companions, " My father will go on conquering, till there be nothing extraordinary left for you and me to do." [5] He is said even to have been mortified at the number of the stars, considering that he had not been able to conquer one world. Such ambition is justly foredoomed to disappointment.

The remarks of philosophers on the vanity of ambition refer generally to that unworthy form of which Alexander may be taken as the type—the idea of self-exaltation, not only without any reference to the happiness, but even regardless of the sufferings, of others.

" A continual and restless search after fortune," says Bacon, " takes up too much of their time who have nobler things to observe." Indeed he elsewhere extends this, and adds, " No man's private fortune can be an end any way worthy of his existence."

Goethe well observes that man " exists for culture; not for what he can accomplish, but for what can be accomplished in him." [6]

As regards fame we must not confuse name and essence. To be remembered is not necessarily to be famous. There is infamy as well as fame; and unhappily almost as many are remembered for the one as for the other, and not a few for a mixture of both.

Who would not rather be forgotten than recollected as Ahab or Jezebel, Nero or Commodus, Messalina or Heliogabalus, King John or Richard III?

" To be nameless in worthy deeds exceeds an infamous history. The Canaanitish woman lives more happily without a name than Herodias with one; and who would not rather have been the good thief than Pilate?" [7]

[5] Plutarch. [6] Emerson. [7] Sir J. Browne.

Kings and generals are often remembered as much for their deaths as for their lives, for their misfortunes as for their successes. The hero of Thermopylæ was Leonidas, not Xerxes. Alexander's empire fell to pieces at his death. Napoleon was a great genius, though no hero. But what came of all his victories. They passed away like the smoke of his guns, and he left France weaker, poorer, and smaller than he found her. The most lasting result of his genius is no military glory, but the Code Napoleon.

A surer and more glorious title to fame is that of those who are remembered for some act of justice or self-devotion: the self-sacrifice of Leonidas, the good faith of Regulus, are the glories of history.

In some cases where men have been called after places the men are remembered, while the places are forgotten. When we speak of Palestrina or Perugino, of Nelson or Wellington, of Newton or Darwin, who remembers the towns? We think only of the men.

Goethe has been called the soul of his century.

It is true that we have but meagre biographies of Shakespeare or of Plato; yet how much we know about them.

Statesmen and generals enjoy great celebrity during their lives. The newspapers chronicle every word and movement. But the fame of the philosopher and poet is more enduring.

Wordsworth deprecates monuments to poets, with some exceptions, on this very account. The case of statesmen, he says, is different. It is right to commemorate them because they might otherwise be forgotten; but poets live in their books forever.

The real conquerors of the world indeed are not the generals but the thinkers; not Genghis Khan and Akbar, Rameses, or Alexander, but Confucius and Buddha, Aristotle, Plato, and Christ. The rulers and kings who reigned over our ancestors have for the most part long since sunk into oblivion—they are forgotten for want of some sacred bard to give them life—or are remembered, like Suddhodana and Pilate, from their association with higher spirits.

Such men's lives cannot be compressed into any biography. They lived not merely in their own generation, but for all time. When we speak of the Elizabethan period we think of Shake-

speare and Bacon, Raleigh and Spenser. The minister and secretaries of state, with one or two exceptions, we scarcely remember, and Bacon himself is recollected less as the judge than as the philosopher.

Moreover, to what do generals and statesmen owe their fame? They were celebrated for their deeds, but to the poet and the historian they owe their fame, and to the poet and historian we owe their glorious memories and the example of their virtues.

> "*Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona*
> *Multi; sed omnes illacrimabiles*
> *Urgentur ignotique longa*
> *Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.*"

There were many brave men before Agamemnon, but their memory has perished because they were celebrated by no divine bard.

Montrose happily combined the two, when in "My dear and only love" he promises,

> "I'll make thee glorious by my pen,
> And famous by my sword."

It is remarkable, and encouraging, how many of the greatest men have risen from the lowest rank, and triumphed over obstacles which might well have seemed insurmountable; nay, even obscurity itself may be a source of honor. The very doubts as to Homer's birthplace have contributed to this glory, seven cities, as we all know, laying claim to the great poet—

> "Smyrna, Chios, Colophon, Salamis, Rhodos, Argos, Athenæ."

To take men of science only. Ray was the son of a blacksmith, Watt of a shipwright, Franklin of a tallow-chandler, Dalton of a handloom weaver, Fraünhofer of a glazier, Laplace of a farmer, Linnæus of a poor curate, Faraday of a blacksmith, Lamarck of a banker's clerk; Davy was an apothecary's assistant, Galileo, Kepler, Sprengel, Cuvier, and Sir W. Herschel were all children of very poor parents.

It is, on the other hand, sad to think how many of our greatest benefactors are unknown even by name. Who discovered the art of procuring fire? Prometheus is merely the personifi-

cation of forethought. Who invented letters? Cadmus is a mere name.

These inventions, indeed, are lost in the mists of antiquity, but even as regards recent progress the steps are often so gradual and so numerous, that few inventions can be attributed entirely, or even mainly, to any one person.

Columbus is said, and truly said, to have discovered America, though the Northmen were there before him.

We Englishmen have every reason to be proud of our fellow-countrymen. To take philosophers and men of science only, Bacon and Hobbes, Locke and Berkeley, Hume and Hamilton, will always be associated with the progress of human thought; Newton with gravitation; Adam Smith with political economy; Young with the undulatory theory of light; Herschel with the discovery of Uranus and the study of the star depths; Lord Worcester, Trevethick, and Watt with the steam-engine; Wheatstone with the electric telegraph, Jenner with the banishment of smallpox; Simpson with the practical application of anæsthetics; and Darwin with the creation of modern natural history.

These men, and such as these, have made our history and moulded our opinions; and though during life they may have occupied, comparatively, an insignificant space in the eyes of their countrymen, they became at length an irresistible power, and have now justly grown to a glorious memory.